

Tarawneh leaves for Cairo today

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh leaves today for Cairo to convey a message from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak dealing with the outcome of Prince Hassan's meetings with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in addition to the latest developments in the region, according to Jordan Television. Tarawneh will also hold talks with his Egyptian counterpart Kamal Ganzouri on efforts being made to revive the peace process in the region and to reiterate Jordan's support for Egypt's efforts to ease the tension between Ankara and Damascus. Tarawneh will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khatib.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

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Prince Hassan, Netanyahu express 'cautious optimism' that Washington summit will lead to breakthrough

By Alia A. Toukan

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Wednesday expressed "cautious optimism" that the upcoming Wye Plantation talks between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel would lead to a peace breakthrough.

In eleven hour discussions, held a day before Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat are set to meet in the U.S. to hammer out the final details of what is hoped to end the 20-month peace deadlock, the Israeli premier, accompanied by newly-appointed Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon, briefed Crown Prince Hassan on Israel's position regarding the talks, scheduled to begin Thursday.

"The prime minister gave us a pleasant surprise visit to Jordan today to put us in the mood of realism, but also a certain cautious hope, that the conversations in Wye (Plantation) are going to mean a final consolidation of a very important step in the on-going conversations between the PNA and Israel," said Prince Hassan.

Officials said Arafat asked Jordan to intervene on the PNA's behalf to convince Israel to accept the American peace deal, which calls for a 13 per cent Israeli troop withdrawal from the West Bank, among other things.

Jordan aims to "facilitate" movement on the Palestinian-Israeli peace track, but not to mediate between the two sides, said the Crown Prince, adding that the Kingdom does not speak on behalf of the Palestinians.

"We have said on more than one occasion that we do not negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians, and we do not pressure the Palestinians, nor do we represent

them," said Prince Hassan. The Crown Prince, who held talks with the Palestinian president on Monday, said Arafat is determined to see an end to the peace stalemate.

Prince Hassan also said people want to enjoy the economic benefits of peace, that have so far been elusive.

For his part, Netanyahu said that a successful round of talks in the U.S. was possible if the Palestinians "live up to their commitments."

"We believe they can succeed. Israel is prepared to do its part if the Palestinians do their part...especially in the field of security and other outstanding issues," said Netanyahu.

The Israeli prime minister said he hoped his country's 1994 peace treaty with Jordan would serve as a model for a peace that "would expand and encompass the whole region."

Netanyahu's visit to Amman comes a day after an Israeli man was shot dead, which prompted him to say on Tuesday that there is "no chance at this stage" of signing a peace deal with the PNA. During Wednesday's press conference he denied saying this.

On the Jordanian side, Crown Prince Hassan was accompanied by Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh, Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khatib, Minister of Information Nasser Judeh, Minister of Water Hani Mulki, and Jordan's Ambassador to Israel Omar Rifai.

In addition to Netanyahu and Sharon, the Israeli delegation also included Israel's Ambassador to Jordan Oded Eran. According to Jordan news agency, Petra, the talks between the two sides also focused on economic-related issues, in particular "Israeli obstacles to trade between Jordan and the PNA."



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Wednesday welcomes Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is accompanied by newly-appointed Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon to the Royal Court. The talks were attended on the Jordanian side by Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh and Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani (Photo by Boghos)

Israel puts positive gloss on success of peace summit

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel put a positive gloss on prospects for a U.S. Middle East peace summit on Wednesday, predicting success if Palestinian gunmen agreed to crack down on activists.

Under U.S. pressure to give peace a chance, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu — Arafat's begrudging summit partner — changed his main tune from that of Tuesday night when his office said a signed deal had "no chance at this stage."

U.S. President Bill Clinton aims to break a 19-month-old peace deadlock at the summit

starting on Thursday with Israel handing over a further 13 per cent of the West Bank to Palestinians in return for security guarantees.

While Arafat left Palestinian-ruled Gaza for London en route for the summit at Wye Plantation outside Washington, Netanyahu and his new hawkish Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon discussed the forthcoming talks with HRH Crown Prince Hassan in Amman.

"We believe they can succeed. Israel is prepared to do its part if the Palestinians do their part...especially in the field of security and other outstanding

issues," Netanyahu told a news conference in Amman.

The killing of an Israeli by suspected Palestinian gunmen on Tuesday had prompted Netanyahu's office to say that under the circumstances there was no chance of signing a new deal with the Palestinians.

"Israel wants to reach peace. I believe that it's important, it's possible, it's reachable. It's not a short procedure. It will take time," Sharon said in occupied Jerusalem, sounding uncharacteristically upbeat about peace in his first comments since the cabinet appointed him foreign minister on Tuesday. "Of course Israel will be very care-

ful in its demand that the Palestinian side will implement all its obligations that have been decided and agreed," added Sharon, whose appointment as foreign minister caps a remarkable comeback from his forced ouster as defence minister in 1983 during the Lebanon war.

In Gaza City, 300 Palestinian demonstrators opposed to Sharon's appointment and to making concessions at the summit chanted: "Clinton's a coward — No to the American solutions."

Palestinian officials said Arafat would meet British Prime Minister Tony Blair in London. They accused

Netanyahu of using Tuesday's killing as a pretext to row back from an accord.

"Netanyahu's goal is to delay or even stop reaching a deal and he is using the killings, as an excuse," Palestinian negotiator Hassan Asfour said in Washington.

In Gaza on Tuesday, Arafat said there was still "a lot to be solved" before a deal could be sealed. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright spoke to Netanyahu by phone on Tuesday and her spokesman said an agreement at the summit was no sure thing.

In another pessimistic sign, a poll of 1,331 Palestinians

showed a majority supported military action against Israel and doubted a final peace deal could ever be forged.

The survey, by the Centre for Palestinian Research and Studies, showed a slight increase in support for armed violence against Israel to 51 per cent from 50 per cent in August, while 44 per cent opposed it and the rest had no opinion.

Netanyahu's office denied a report in Israel's Haaretz newspaper on Wednesday that U.S. officials had asked Israel to consider accepting the principle of an eventual Palestinian state as part of a final pact at the summit (see page 12).

Amman demands Damascus account for fate of Jordanians in Syria

By Alia A. Toukan

AMMAN — The Foreign Ministry has presented the Syrian chargé d'affaires in Amman with a list of Jordanians missing or detained in Syria and has demanded "immediate answers" as to their whereabouts, officials said Wednesday.

A government document made available to the Jordan

Times lists 239 Jordanians missing after entering Syria, and 190 detained in Syrian jails.

Officials told the Jordan Times the number of Jordanians held in Syria on "security-related" grounds has increased in the past few months.

"Many (Jordanians) have been detained upon entry into Syria," said an official, adding that if Damascus did not want

Jordanians to enter Syrian territory then the concerned authorities should "just send them back at the border," rather than arrest them once they enter the country.

"They treat Jordanians as if they are Syrian subjects," he said.

The document, which listed the names of all those missing or jailed, said that successive governments, as well as inter-

national and local human rights groups, have repeatedly attempted to inquire as to the whereabouts of the Jordanians, and to lobby for their release, but to no avail.

The officials said Jordan approached Syria on many occasions over those missing and detained, but Damascus has always claimed ignorance when confronted with the issue, and demanded a list of

names. During an Arab League summit in Cairo two weeks ago, Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khatib gave his Syrian counterpart Farouk Sharara a memorandum inquiring about the fate of the prisoners.

The government's list conflicts with other figures on the number of prisoners in Syria, cited in the past week. The original number exceeded

700, while a popular committee of families of Jordanian prisoners in Syria maintains the figure exceeds 1,000 (see related story on page 3).

The document said the exact number of Jordanians held in Syria is hard to establish as some may have been forced into changing their names, while others may have been released but have not returned to the Kingdom.

Syria waiting for reply from Turkey to resume direct talks

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria said on Wednesday it was expecting a Turkish response to its offer to resume talks of the joint specialised committees to discuss security, water and political issues as part of efforts to solve a crisis between the two neighbours.

"We offered to resume meetings of the specialised joint committees to discuss any outstanding issues and to find solutions that would serve the interests of both countries and peoples," a senior Syrian official said.

He told Reuters the mediation efforts by Egypt to solve the crisis over Damascus' alleged support for Kurdistan rebels were still continuing and making progress.

"We in Syria are keen to preserve good ties with our neighbour Turkey and to prevent anything that might disturb these ties especially that there are many things in common between the Syrian and Turkish peoples," he added.

The specialised Syrian-Turkish committees were formed in 1992 when both states were in good terms but the meetings stopped over four years ago.

Turkey has threatened to use force if Syria does not expel Abdullah Ocalan, head of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) which has been waging a 14-year-old campaign for Kurdish autonomy in southeast Turkey.

But several Turkish officials indicated following the mediation efforts by Egypt and Iran

that the PKK leader has left Syria.

Damascus also confirmed he was not in Syria with an official saying Ocalan has not entered Syria for months and that if he ever came he could have done so with a false passport.

In addition to the security issue Syria is also at odds with Turkey over territorial sovereignty, water sharing and Ankara's increasing military ties with Israel.

Diplomats said that Syria wanted Turkey to forge a permanent water agreement with Damascus that would ensure the continued flow of "adequate" amounts of water of the River Euphrates to Syria and to slow down its military cooperation with Israel.

Four-year-old Iraqi cancer victim arrives in Amman en route home

AMMAN (AP) — An Iraqi child who was treated in Scotland for leukaemia because of the efforts of a British lawmaker arrived in Jordan Wednesday on her way back home.

The four-year-old Mariam Hamza, who has lost her hair from chemotherapy, was carried by her grandmother, Faten Hamid, into a VIP airport lounge after arriving in Amman on a commercial flight.

"Thank God, Mariam was taken to England and received the treatment," Hamid said.

The girl was accompanied by Iraqi-British physician Foutouh Binyamin and Labour Party Parliament Member George Galloway who had taken her out of Iraq in April.

Binyamin said the girl underwent chemotherapy and radiotherapy for several months in a Scottish hospital. "She is in a remission stage and has recovered," he said.

The group is scheduled to leave for Baghdad Thursday aboard a private plane that has been approved to fly to Iraq by the United Nations in an exemption from the sanctions, which prevent flights to and from the country.

The U.N. also had allowed Mariam to be flown out of Baghdad instead of subjecting her to the gruelling drive of at least 10 hours across the desert to the Amman airport.

Galloway, a regular visitor to Iraq, has long called for the lifting of U.N. sanctions imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of

Kuwait. He spotted Mariam in a hospital during one of his trips and arranged for her to be treated in Scotland. She also was suffering from salmonella.

Galloway said he wanted to highlight the suffering of the Iraqi public due to U.N. sanctions that have caused severe shortages of medicines and medical equipment. Iraqi officials say hundreds of children die every day in the country.

Mariam's cancer treatment cost \$55,000 (\$93,000), which was paid for by private donations.

The girl, who brought with her 3,000 toys for other Iraqi children and medication for two years, was taken to Al Amal Cancer Hospital in Amman for an overnight stay.

Arafat cancels Mayo Clinic visit

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has decided to cancel a scheduled visit to His Majesty King Hussein at a Minnesota hospital ahead of the Mideast summit here, Palestinian officials said Wednesday. Arafat was due to arrive in Washington at around 8:00 p.m. (1000 GMT) after stopping in London for talks with British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Arafat had planned to confer with the King who is undergoing cancer treatment at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester ahead of the summit. However the officials said Arafat could make the trip to Minnesota on Saturday when negotiations break for the Jewish Sabbath. A Mayo Clinic spokeswoman told the Associated Press Arafat cancelled the trip to the clinic. Spokeswoman Jane Jacobs said she did not know why the visit was cancelled or whether it would be rescheduled.

Regent briefs King on talks

Clinton calls His Majesty

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, yesterday briefed His Majesty King Hussein on the outcome of the two meetings the Crown Prince held with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Also Wednesday U.S. President Bill Clinton telephoned King Hussein to inquire about his health. President Clinton wished the King a speedy recovery and continued good health and happiness, JTV said.

The two leaders exchanged views on several regional issues, including the peace talks between Israel and Palestinians and the bilateral summit which will be held at Wye Plantation in the vicinity of Washington to discuss the U.S. proposals for the second phase of the Israeli army redeployment in the West Bank.

President Clinton expressed the U.S. commitment to pursue efforts to achieve peace in the region and help Israel and Palestinians to work out their differences.

President Clinton expressed appreciation for the role King Hussein plays in supporting the Middle East peace process and pledged his country's continued support for Jordan in all fields, particularly in economic and defence fields.

The two leaders also exchanged views on the Turkish-Syrian dispute and the ongoing crisis between the two countries.

Both leaders underlined the need to settle the dispute between the two neighbouring countries through dialogue and peaceful means.

They commended the Egyptian mediation efforts to defuse the crisis and wished the Egyptians every success in their endeavours.

Amman municipality approves building Maronite church

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman municipal council late Tuesday endorsed the leasing of a four-dunum plot of land to the Christian Maronite community to build a church.

Thirty-four of the 40 council members voted for the 20-year lease, which was granted for a symbolic annual fee of JD 100.

The four-dunum plot on which Jordan's around 1,500 Maronites will have their parish lays on the Airport Highway south of the capital, close to the Amman National Park at Um Kundaum.

One Municipal Council member told the Jordan Times Wednesday that the decision will have to be approved by the Council of Ministers before a contract to lease the land can be signed.

A report published in the Arabic daily Al Dustour also on Wednesday said six council members

opposed the move during Tuesday's council session. Council member Musa Wahsh was quoted as saying that Jordanian lands

cannot be leased because they were declared a religious endowment (Waqf) in a legal opinion issued by Muslim scholars (Fatwa).

Such a view was reportedly countered by council member Nadim Muasher, who said the lease to the Maronite community reflected Jordan's religious freedom and historic openness to people of different faiths.

Plans to build a Maronite church appeared in the local press last week and were immediately met with fire by three Muslim Brotherhood leaders, who urged the Municipal Council not to approve the lease.

The government stressed that religious freedom, upheld by the constitution, is and will continue to be a component of national identity.

Information Minister Nasser Judeh said earlier this week the Maronite church ranked sixth in a list of nine Christian churches recognised by a 1958 Royal Decree.

Former officer accuses Zeroual aide of torture

ALGIERS (R) — A former intelligence officer accused a top aide of Algerian President Liamine Zeroual of racketeering and supervising the torture of activists.

Hicham Abboud said in an open letter carried by three local dailies on Wednesday that Mohammed Betchine, who headed the North African country's powerful military intelligence apparatus until the early 1990s, had exploited his vast powers to accumulate wealth for himself and his family.

"Algeria is not honoured to have in its power structure a person whose financial scandals and brutality in employing his powers fill the front pages," Abboud said in the letter in which he detailed alleged Betchine's wrongdoings.

"I am ready for a public confrontation [supported] with documents that testify to everything I have written," added Abboud, who was head of Betchine's office at the intelligence service.

The letter was published in full in the Arabic-language newspaper *Al Khabar*.

Excerpts of it appeared in the two main French-language newspapers *La Tribune* and *El Watan*.

Analysts said the virulent attack appeared to be part of a campaign by influential army generals who, they said, last month forced Zeroual to step down 21 months before the end of his term after he refused to sack Betchine as his top advisor.

In his letter, Abboud alleged that Betchine had illegally taken over government villas and handed them over to his daughter and his son-in-law, accepted luxury cars in return for favours, while at the same time used his influence to build a business network.

But *La Tribune* newspaper said the attack did not absolve Abboud from responsibility in Betchine's alleged violations.

"These serious accusations, which included Abboud's testimony that he witnessed Betchine personally supervising torture [of activists] in October 1988, do not clear his name because he [Abboud] was an intelligence officer at the time," it said in a commentary. "The result is terrible and its

repercussions serious in a country that is entering a crucial stage while there no light at the end of the Algerian tunnel," *La Tribune* said, referring to almost seven years of civil strife that have racked Algeria.

The allegations followed similar ones in June and July from some political groups who said Betchine wanted power in order to build what they dubbed as "Betchine's empire."

Betchine's allies have responded in "support statements" carried by the official Algerian news agency APS saying the allegations intended to discredit a "patriotic linchpin of the power structure."

The North African country has been shaken by conflict between security forces and Islamists since early 1992 when the authorities cancelled a general election dominated by Islamists.

Human right groups have questioned some of the killings and have called for an independent probe into the violence in which more than 65,000 people have been killed, according to Western estimates.



ANTI-TURKISH RALLY IN DAMASCUS: Palestinian protesters shout anti-Turkish slogans Wednesday during a demonstration at the Yarmouk refugee camp near Damascus. The demonstrators, who protested the Turkish threats against Syria, carried pictures of Syrian President Hafez Assad (Reuters photo)

Sudan extends truce in south to help aid delivery

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan has extended a ceasefire with rebels in the southern Bahr Al Ghazal region for three months to allow food relief to reach the hunger-stricken area.

"The government has renewed its commitment to the ceasefire in Bahr Al Ghazal for three months," the government newspaper *Al Anbaa* said on Wednesday. "Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail said the decree was made on humanitarian grounds."

Sudan and the main southern rebel group, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), agreed in July on a limited three-month ceasefire which expired on Wednesday.

The SPLA said last week it would extend the truce in Bahr Al Ghazal for three months, and said its ceasefire would cover Western Upper Nile, an area also suffering a hunger crisis.

The *Al Anbaa* report did not mention Western Upper Nile. Aid agencies have said they regretted the government ceasefire did not cover that area.

British Minister of State at the Foreign Office Derek Fatchett has welcomed the government's decision to extend the ceasefire in Bahr Al Ghazal by three months.

He said in a statement the renewal of the truce by the

government and SPLA "means that much needed aid will continue to reach a region that has been so badly affected by hunger."

"I hope it will also give confidence to the two parties to pursue broader peace negotiations within the IGAD framework," Fatchett said on Tuesday.

The original ceasefire was agreed while Fatchett was visiting Sudan and Kenya in July.

The government has held several inconclusive rounds of talks with the SPLA under the aegis of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD), a regional grouping.

Egyptian rights group slams U.S. over religious persecution law

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian Human Rights Organisation (EOHR) on Wednesday accused the United States of employing double standards, after Congress passed a law providing for sanctions against countries accused of religious persecution.

"The EOHR believes that this law is a clear manifestation of the double standards

and selective criteria by the USA in dealing with human rights issues."

"The USA disregards the gross violations committed by Israeli troops against the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people... and on the massacres taking place in Kosovo."

"At the same time it selects a number of human rights

issues in other regions of the world and uses them for political reasons," it said.

The law allows the imposition of diplomatic and economic sanctions on nations Washington deems religious persecutors and has had the backing of Jewish and Christian religious groups, including the U.S.-based American Coptic Association.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent calls for developing PSD

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday called for further developing the performance of the Public Security Department through offering quality training and utilising new technology. During a visit to the department, Prince Hassan stressed the need for implementing advanced training programmes to cope with the nature of the difficult security tasks assigned to the force. The Regent was briefed by PSD Director Lt. General Nasoub Muehieddin on the PSD's requirements to further develop security services. The Crown Prince also visited a special police command, where he was briefed by its commander, Brigadier Mazen Mughrabi, on its tasks and its role in providing field support for PSD units.

Regent receives Danish general

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday received the chief of staff of the Danish armed forces, Lieutenant General Christian Feit. Prince Hassan conferred the Al Istihqaq Medal of the First Order upon the Danish general. Attending the audience was the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mira'i Kaabneh.

Prince Ra'd attends play

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Wednesday attended the first performance of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli play at the Royal Cultural Centre. The play entitled "The Last Enemy," was financed by the United States Information Agency, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, the Pera Center for Peace, Palestinian and Israeli organisations and UNESCO.

Students protest over Netanyahu visit

AMMAN (R) — University students burned the Israeli flag and chanted slogans Wednesday in protest against a visit by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "Just you wait, Netanyahu, we will bury you in your grave," protesters shouted during the demonstration by 150 students at the University of Jordan. "You coward, you are neither animal nor human." As security guards looked on, the students set fire to a card painted in the colours of the Israeli flag and chanted Islamic slogans. Netanyahu paid a flying visit to Jordan for talks before a summit meeting in the United States on Thursday with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Government to loan JD11m for housing

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government has decided to loan the country's military housing fund JD11 million to help it build housing estates for army personnel. Information Minister Nasser Judeh, speaking after a regular Cabinet session Tuesday evening, said the decision was taken in compliance with the directives of His Majesty King Hussein and in implementation of the commitments made by the prime minister in his statement of policy to Parliament in August. The loan to the military fund will be backed by a government guarantee and will be disbursed through the Jordan Real Estate Refinancing Company, the minister said. The military fund will be responsible for paying back the loans, and the government will exempt the beneficiaries from paying interest, he added.

EC concludes sampling contract

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Scientific Society and the European Commission Delegation yesterday signed an agreement under which the EC will carry out water sampling as part of additional investigations within the European Union-financed feasibility study on wastewater collection, treatment, disposal and re-use systems for the Catchment Area of the Yarmouk and Jordan rivers, an EC statement said. Results of the sampling will be incorporated in the final feasibility study of the "wastewater" project, an ECU780,000 project consisting of the preparation of technical, economic and financial feasibility studies, preliminary designs and an environmental impact assessment for the main project elements. These include construction or expansion of wastewater collection and treatment plants, installation of disposal or re-use systems, and treatment of agricultural drainage water.

Women charged for counterfeiting

AMMAN (J.T.) — State Prosecutor Samed Mirshad on Wednesday charged a 30-year-old woman with trafficking and possessing one counterfeited \$100 bill. According to the prosecution sheet, the defendant, Zeinab A., possessed the \$100 forged bill and sold it to her friend for JD20. "When her friend tried to cash the amount, she discovered that it was forged."

Iranian authority rejects hospital segregation bill

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's Council of Guardians rejected a bill calling for sexual segregation in hospitals approved by parliament early this month, newspapers reported Wednesday.

The council, a higher legislative body which seeks to ensure laws passed by the parliament conform to the constitution and Islamic law, said the programme would cost money.

The bill, passed by the conservative-dominated parliament on Oct. 4, would require the health ministry to take measures on gender segregation in hospitals.

That includes offering medical services compatible with Islamic law, in particular the treatment of women by female staff and men by male staff.

The measure received initial approval in April despite opposition from the government, reformists and the media.

Liberal editor freed from Iranian jail

TEHRAN (AFP) — The director of a popular liberal Iranian newspaper has been freed from jail a month after he was arrested on charges of acting against national security, the official IRNA news agency reported Wednesday.

Hamid-Reza Jalai-Pour of *Toos* daily was released Tuesday night after his mother met Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the agency said.

After the meeting, Khamenei ordered a Tehran revolutionary court to release Jalai-Pour on bail. IRNA said, adding that the "investigation into Jalai-Pour's charges would continue."

Toos was shut down by the security forces and its editorial staff arrested in mid-September for "acting against the national security and interests."

The three senior officials of the newspaper *Mashallah* Shamsolvaizine and Ibrahim Nabavi and Jalai-Pour were all taken into detention.

The culture ministry said *Toos* was closed because of an interview with former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in which he claimed Islamic Republic founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had sought and been granted political asylum when he went to France before the Islamic revolution in 1978.

Toos, which supported President Mohammad Khatami and his moderate views, had been popular with young Iranians and intellectuals.

But it had come under growing attack from hardline conservatives which accused the paper of seeking to undermine the values of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Saudi Arabia denies asking for Ben Laden's extradition

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz on Wednesday said the freeze between Riyadh and the Taliban was not due to the Islamic militia's refusal to extradite Saudi dissident Osama Ben Laden.

"The Saudi government did not ask the Taliban to hand over Osama Ben Laden," the minister said, quoted by the local *Al Jazira* daily.

"The breakdown in diplomatic relations with the Afghan movement was the result of certain actions" by the Taliban, the minister said without elaborating.

Talks on terrorism, including specific references to Ben Laden, were held between U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen and Saudi Arabia's Defence Minister Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz on Tuesday.

Following the meeting, Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon told reporters the talks covered bringing "Ben Laden to justice, efforts by the Saudis, as well as our efforts to attack his terrorism network."

On Wednesday, Prince Nayef added: "The kingdom wishes Afghanistan well, but certain actions which should not have been carried out by the brothers in Afghanistan led to this."

Riyadh expelled the Taliban's charge d'affaires from the kingdom on Sept. 23 and recalled its own charge d'affaires from Kabul.

Wakil Ahmad Mutawakkil, a spokesman for the Taliban in Abu Dhabi, told AFP last week that "Saudi Arabia officially asked us, before the U.S. raid [on Afghanistan], to hand over Osama Ben Laden but we refused."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

Thursday Programmes

15:10 Cartoon — Superman

15:30 Drama — Sliders

16:00 Doc. — Life on the Digital Edge

17:00 French Programme

18:15 Sliders — Sparks (Ep 1)

19:00 Le Journal

19:15 Science Magazine — L'oeuf De Colomb

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Comedy — Family Matters

20:00 The Great Romances

20:30 Drama — Dr. Quinn the Medicine Woman

21:10 Oprah Winfrey

22:00 News in English

22:30 Feature film — "Sleeping With the Enemy"

23:59 Comedy — The Boys

00:30 End of T.X.

Friday Programmes

15:10 Animated Cartoon

15:30 Treasure Hunt

16:00 Feature film

18:15 The Simpsons

19:00 Le Journal

19:15 French Programme — Allo La Terre

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Comedy — The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air

20:00 Cinema, Cinema

20:30 Babylon-5

21:10 Destination Mars

22:00 News in English

22:30 The X Files

23:10 The Halifax

23:59 End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:17 — Fajr

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

05:34 (Sunrise) Duha

11:21 Dhuhr

14:37 'Asr

17:09 Maghreb

18:26 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Swedish, Tel. 5920740

Assemblies of God Church Tel.

4632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

Terra Sancta Church Tel.

4622366

Anglican Church Tel.

4624853/4624811

St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox

Church Tel. 4771751

Amman International Church

Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church

in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter

Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la

Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel.

4646138

Church of Presentation, Swed-

ish Tel. 5920146

The Uniate Catholic Church

Tel. 4624757

The English-Language

Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel.

4892679

The Baptist Church Tel.

4628052

The Armenian Catholic

Church Tel. 4771331

The Armenian Orthodox

Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department

of Meteorology

On Thursday temperatures are

expected to drop slightly and

humidity to rise with clouds

appearing at different altitudes

and winds northwesterly

moderate to active. On Friday,

temperatures will drop further.

Fine weather conditions will

prevail during the day becoming

cool at night. In Aqaba, it

will be hot and occasionally

dusty. Winds southerly active,

and seas choppy.

Amman 19/31

Aqaba 24/37

Deserts 16/33

Jordan Valley 26/37

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 34, Aqaba 40

Humidity readings: Amman

14 per cent, Aqaba 32 per

cent.

Following are the highest tem-

peratures expected today in the

following areas:

Ajloun 26

Jerash 30

Um Qays 31

Madaba 32

Petra 33

Dead Seas 37

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Youssef Rashid 4875792

Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 4788848

Dr. Khalil Jhalil 4784450

Dr. Walid Al Masri 5675485

Firas pharmacy 5661912

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 4637055

Nairookh pharmacy 4623672

Al Salam pharmacy 4636730

Yacoub pharmacy 4644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660

Najib pharmacy 5347632

IRBID:

Dr. Issam Al Salih 246858

Al Quods pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111

Civil Defence Department 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Res-

cue 4630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 462111

N BRIEF

oping PSD

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r Netanyahu visit

students burned the Israeli flag in protest against a visit by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the Jordanian capital, Amman. The students, who were part of a demonstration, said they were protesting against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories.

JD11m for housing

Government has decided to allocate JD11 million to help the poor in Amman. The money will be used to build small houses for the poor and to provide them with basic services.

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Court invalidates union's election results

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The Higher Court of Justice Wednesday invalidated the results of the Union of Workers in Land Transport and Mechanics (UWLTM) elections held in Karak in November 1997.

Eight union members filed a lawsuit at the Higher Court of Justice on June 14 against the labour unions, the board of the UWLTM and the president of the election committee demanding the invalidation of the elections after the administrative committee was elected by acclamation on Nov. 11.

The court ruled that the UWLTM board did not follow legal procedures when holding the elections.

The court maintained that the board should have followed the list of candidates requested by individuals over a one-week period from the closing date of the nominations "in order to ensure that the candidates meet the necessary qualifications to run in the elections."

The list should be referred to the general union, which in turn should announce the accepted and rejected candidates at the union's headquarters, the court said.

"The board should clarify why certain names were rejected to give the rejected candidates the opportunity to appeal the board's decision during the one-week period," the court said.

It added: "However, the board did not follow these legal procedures, did not take into consideration the specified period and did not publish the list of accepted and rejected union candidates," the court ruled.

Wednesday's ruling was handed down by Justices Sulaiman Owajan, Farah Rabadi, Mohammad Alwanah, Misbah Thab and Mohammad Odeh.



Relatives of Jordanians imprisoned or detained in Syria hold banners and placards calling for the release of an estimated 1,000 prisoners and detainees (Petra photo)

Families of Jordanian prisoners in Syria stage sit-in at Parliament

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Families of Jordanian prisoners and detainees in Syrian jails on Wednesday staged a sit-in in front of Parliament to press for the release of their relatives.

During the peaceful 90-minute protest, hundreds of participants held up photos of relatives they say are being held by the Syrian authorities and placards calling on President Hafez Assad to order the release of their kin.

"Twenty years in jail are enough," said one placard. "Save our children" and "President Assad: Please release our relatives," read others.

According to a committee formed by the families, many of the Jordanian prisoners are being held without trial, and the bulk of them were political activists and former members of Palestinian organisations who were arrested in Syria and Lebanon.

Imad Sharqawi, a lawyer and spokesman of the committee, said the families might stage another sit-in near the Prime Ministry and another near the Syrian embassy "if deputies declined to undertake any effort."

"The government has not taken the issue seriously in the past, and we demand real efforts be exerted in this direction," he said.

Sharqawi told reporters that the committee believes there are more than 1,000 Jordanians either in jail or missing in Syria.

He said a letter was submitted to acting Lower House Speaker Nawaf Kharwaldeh calling among other things for international human right groups to send fact-finding missions to Syria to inquire about the fate of Jordanian prisoners.

Omar Ahmad Inman, whose father is believed to have been jailed since 1973, said the Syrian government did not allow his family to locate the whereabouts of his father.

"My father was arrested in Lebanon and later on was taken to Syria. We were not allowed to inquire about him, but some inmates who were with him in Mazraa prison told us that he was still alive," Inman told the Jordan Times.

The mother of Khalid Rashid Abdullah said her son was arrested in Syria 16 years ago and was accused of being a "member of the Jordanian intelligence service."

"My son was a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and was arrested and never tried. What we know is that he is still detained in Palmyra prison," she told the Jordan Times.

The protest came amid a strain in relations between Amman and Damascus after Syrian Defence Minister Mustafa Tlass made accusations against Jordan that drew a strong reaction from the public.

Hakim Fayez, who was detained by the Syrian authorities in 1971 and released in 1993, criticised the government for neglecting its citizens in Syrian jails.

Fayez was among 17 members of the Baath Socialist Party in Syria who were detained following Assad's coup that overthrew former President Hafez Assad.

"Jordanian prisoners have been detained and jailed for the past 25 years, the government knows their names and where they were being held, but it exerted no effort to seek their release," he said.

"We want all Jordanian prisoners to be released, but the government is committing a mistake if it is trying to twist the arm of the Syrian government by playing the prisoners card," Fayez said.

Vatican ready to recognise Palestinian state — envoy

'Israeli measures do not help dialogue on Jerusalem'

By Marwan Sudah
Petra

AMMAN — The Vatican's chargé d'affaires in Jordan, Monsignor Dominique Rezaeu, Wednesday said the Vatican is ready to recognise a Palestinian state and opposes Israel's expansion of the western borders of Jerusalem and the construction of Jewish settlements in Palestine.

"The Vatican is deeply interested in Palestinian legislation and freedom of worship in Palestine, and it is ready to recognise a Palestine state," said Rezaeu in a statement marking the 20th anniversary of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

"As we recognised the state of Israel, we will be ready to recognise the state of Palestine as part of the rest of the world community," Rezaeu added.

He noted that the Vatican was among the first nations to recognise the independence of Bosnia and Croatia.

The Palestinians have the right to life and security, and the Vatican will back the rights of people in conformity with religious and humanitarian principles, Rezaeu said.

"The Palestinians have full rights to their land, and Israel cannot exercise its own rights without recognising those of the Palestinian people," added the envoy.

Referring to Jerusalem, Rezaeu noted the pope's declared stand and the Vatican's rejection of the Israeli government's expansion of the boundaries of Jerusalem.

"The Israeli measures do not help current efforts for holding a dialogue on the future of the Holy City, which is the cradle of the monotheistic religions," he said.

Rezaeu said the Vatican supports the U.N. General Assembly decision condemning the building of Israeli settlements in Jerusalem and calling for a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Jerusalem issue through the final status negotiations.

Asserting that any solution should guarantee the rights of worship for all, Rezaeu said the Vatican appeals to the world community to refrain from taking any decisions that might negatively affect the future of Jerusalem.

"The Holy See calls on all parties concerned with the Middle East problem... to pursue efforts to help achieve peace based on the principles and concepts of the 1991 Madrid peace conference and respect signed agreements and accords and the principles of justice," Rezaeu added.

Voicing the Vatican's appreciation of the efforts exerted by His Majesty King Hussein and HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, with regard to Jerusalem, Rezaeu said the Vatican also considers Jordan part of the Holy Land, as it is home to shrines, churches and the site where Jesus was baptised in the Jordan River.

Describing Jordanian-Vatican relations as "strong and progressing," Rezaeu said the Pope may visit Jordan in the course of celebrations marking the end of the second Christian millennium, adding that the Vatican is currently coordinating with the Jordanian government over this event. He did not elaborate.

Comprehensive survey finds achievements in living conditions, room for work

By Francesca Ciriaci
Hind-Lara Mango

AMMAN — Looking at the reflection of society as presented in the most comprehensive and updated survey so far on living conditions in the country, Jordanians have plenty of reasons to be proud of their achievements.

According to "Jordanian Society," published by the Oslo-based Institute for Applied Social Science (FAFO) and launched yesterday by Planning Minister Nabil Ammari, the average life expectancy for Jordanian males stands at around 70, with infant and child mortality rates (28 per 1,000 and 33 per 1,000) very low compared to other countries with a similar fertility rate (4.38).

According to FAFO's publication, which analyses the main results of its 1996 Jordan Living Conditions Survey carried out in cooperation with the Department of Statistics, the majority of Jordanians (62 per cent) own the place in which they live, while only one per cent of households do not have electricity, and, of seven basic amenities, only seven per cent of households lack three or more.

Only two per cent of 6,000 households considered in the multi-topic national survey commissioned by the government lack access to safe water, while seven per cent are exposed to unsafe sewage and nine per cent are not served by paved roads.

While some of the survey's findings were expected — family and kinship are important in Jordan, people tend to live in neighbourhoods with close relatives, and the social network is an important part of people's coping strategies — others refute long-standing popular beliefs — for example, higher fertility rates would be more common in poor areas.

The 16 Jordanian and foreign researchers who authored the report agree that the biggest recent change in living conditions was in schooling.

The verdict, handed down by justices Al-Jawad Khatib, Sami Karaki and Ibrahim Ali, will automatically be reviewed by the Court of Cassation within 30 days.

Witness testifies gun sold to accused murderer

Meanwhile, a prosecution witness in the case of Sa'ed Qashash, the 19-year-old student accused of murdering 11 family members and a life-long friend, Wednesday testified at the Criminal Court that the defendant asked him for a gun one week before the murders.

Qashash, who reportedly confessed in June of this year to murdering his father, mother, other family members and his friend Awa Shalan on June 10 because they were harassing him about his academic performance, faces 12 counts of first degree murder.

Sa'ed asked me to provide him with a gun two weeks prior to the murder, claiming that his father wanted one to protect the family from thieves, and I got him one for JD190," said Hitham Usama, a family neighbour.

The court also heard one of Qashash's classmates, Mohammad Sabbagh, 18, who testified that he saw the defendant driving a car on the day of the incident. "He was acting normally," the witness said.

Also during the court session, Criminal Prosecutor Majid Azzab asked the tribunal to produce the gun that was found on the defendant to allow Usama to identify whether it was the one he sold to Qashash. The gun is being kept at the Public Security Department.

The court tribunal, headed by Judge Mohammad Ajameh and including Mifteh Moubadin and Issa Hamdan, agreed to the request and set Oct. 19 for the next session.

Palestinian department, American group sign agreement on aid to refugees

AMMAN (Petra) — The American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) and the Palestinian Affairs Department Wednesday signed an agreement on providing help to the residents of refugee camps in Jordan and encouraging them to start small income-generating projects.

ANERA President Peter Gubser, who signed the agreement with Palestinian Affairs Department Director Ibrahim Badran, said he was looking forward to cooperating with the department to provide help to the refugees. But he added that his organisation had to conduct a survey to determine the extent of the camp residents' needs before seeking funding for projects to improve their living conditions.

Gubser said the organisation's donors are mainly based in the U.S., in addition to the U.S. government and European organisations affiliated with the U.N., such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development, as well as donors from the Arab World.

Gubser announced that ANERA, a non-governmental and non-profit organisation, plans to open an office in Amman to manage its projects in the country. He noted that the organisation has funded similar projects in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The organisation financed or helped create craft centres, funded agricultural schemes and built slaughterhouses for municipalities in the Palestinian territories, he said.

Gubser said attention will be focused on raising donations in Europe and the U.S. as well as the Arab World to fund projects in Jordan. He added that the organisation will benefit from the expertise of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Amman municipality, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation and others in carrying out its plans.

For his part, Badran voiced Jordan's appreciation of the organisation's assistance.

He said that there is a "dire need" to improve the living conditions of the camps' residents and that Jordan requires the experiences of non-governmental organisations to provide assistance to local communities.

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Agency to set up office in Amman

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Court upholds two 1997 death sentences

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The Criminal Court on Wednesday upheld an Oct. 1997 ruling sentencing two people to death for murdering a 70-year-old man in Wadi Musa in 1996.

Othman Haroun, 25, and Mohammad Sweilem, 23, were found guilty of murdering Abdul Fatah Ali Nawafleh in the Um Al Basateen area on Oct. 9, 1996.

The two were sentenced to death by the Criminal Court on Nov. 10, 1997, but the Court of Cassation returned the case to the lower court three months later and asked it to re-examine the evidence "because the defendants' testimonies were contradictory."

However, in its ruling Wednesday, the Criminal Court insisted on its previous ruling. "After cross-examining eight witnesses for the second time, it was evident that the two defendants were the murderers."

According to court transcripts, the two defendants bought 12 kilograms of drugs which they intended to sell in Amman two weeks prior to the murder and hid them in a bag inside a ruined house in the area.

The defendants, who allegedly knew Nawafleh, killed him on Oct. 9 as he passed by the house while they were leaving it with the bag, the court added.

"Fearing that he might discover the drugs, the two pulled him inside the house and struck him with a brick on his face several times, then Haroun drew his unlicensed gun and shot the victim once in the chest," the court said.

Later, the two dug a 40-centimetre hole and buried Nawafleh and fled the scene, it added.

The two defendants, who were arrested two weeks after the discovery of Nawafleh's body, confessed to the murder, the court stated.

The Jordan Design and Trade Centre, off Wadi Sagra St. until Oct. 31 (Tel. 5694141/2).

* Exhibition of works by Palestinian artist Kamal Boullata entitled "Homage to Jerusalem," an exhibition of paintings by late Palestinian artist Zulfikar Al Sa'idi, an exhibition by Palestinian-American photographer Sa'ad Nuseibeh entitled "The Farthest Mosque" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Nov. 12. (Tel. 4643251/2).

* Goya's Caprichos paintings at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman (Tel. 4610858), until Oct. 23.

* Children's photo exhibition entitled "Al Hussein in the Eyes of Children" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Oct. 15.

* "International Motor Show 99" at the Amman International Motor Show, Airport Road (Tel. 5714211), until Oct. 17.

what's on

FILM

* "Niebla" (in Spanish) at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

CONCERT

* Musical performance by Freddy for Music at the Royal Cultural Centre on Saturday Oct. 17 at 7:00 p.m.

PLAYS

* "The Road to Safety" (in Arabic) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m. (Daily until Oct. 18).

* "Al Da'ira" (in Arabic) by Hayat Hurayk: Anteh at Odcon near the Roman Theatre, downtown Amman on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 593-0682).

THE PALESTINIAN HERITAGE WEEK

* Song festival at the Professional Associations Complex on Thursday and Friday (6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.).

EXHIBITIONS

* Display of autumn collection at

Royal Jordanian Airline

Flight	Class	Price
101	Economy	JD 120
102	Economy	JD 120
103	Economy	JD 120
104	Economy	JD 120
105	Economy	JD 120
106	Economy	JD 120
107	Economy	JD 120
108	Economy	JD 120
109	Economy	JD 120
110	Economy	JD 120
111	Economy	JD 120
112	Economy	JD 120
113	Economy	JD 120
114	Economy	JD 120
115	Economy	JD 120
116	Economy	JD 120
117	Economy	JD 120
118	Economy	JD 120
119	Economy	JD 120
120	Economy	JD 120

Other Flights

Flight	Class	Price
201	Economy	JD 120
202	Economy	JD 120
203	Economy	JD 120
204	Economy	JD 120
205	Economy	JD 120
206	Economy	JD 120
207	Economy	JD 120
208	Economy	JD 120
209	Economy	JD 120
210	Economy	JD 120
211	Economy	JD 120
212	Economy	JD 120
213	Economy	JD 120
214	Economy	JD 120
215	Economy	JD 120
216	Economy	JD 120
217	Economy	JD 120
218	Economy	JD 120
219	Economy	JD 120
220	Economy	JD 120

Nobel Economics Prize goes to Sen of India

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Philosopher-economist Amartya Sen of India won the Nobel Economics Prize Wednesday for his contribution to welfare economics, and in particular his research into the causes of famine and poverty.

Sen, 64, is the first Asian to win the coveted prize since it was first awarded in 1969.

In its citation, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, which adjudged the prize, said that Sen had made "several key contributions to the research on fundamental problems in welfare economics."

"His contributions range from axiomatic theory of social choice, over definitions of welfare and poverty indexes, to empirical studies of famine," it said.

Economists described Sen as a leftwing professor who nevertheless pursued an independent line, leading him, for example to his Nobel-winning work on famine.

Speaking to the Press Trust of India from a New York hotel, Sen said he was "very pleased" to receive the award, particularly because the subject for which he had been honoured touched the lives of ordinary people.

"What pleases me most is that the subject has received recognition," Sen said.

Sen said he had been woken by an early morning telephone call to be told he had won the award.

"I thought there was some emergency when the phone rang," he said. Sen had flown into New York late Tuesday to deliver a lecture.

From the start of his career, Sen showed a "particular interest in the most impoverished members of society," the academy said.

Sen was born in Bengal in 1933 and received his doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 1959. He has been a professor in India, Britain and the United States.

He is currently a professor at Trinity College, Cambridge. He is the first solo winner of the economics prize since 1995. Sen will be presented with a medal and a cheque for 7.6 million Swedish kronor (\$938,000) at an official ceremony in Stockholm on Dec. 10, the 102nd anniversary of the death of the creator of the prizes, Swedish inventor and industrialist Alfred Nobel.

The Nobel jury praised Sen for his humanist approach to the often detached world of economic study.

"By combining tools from economics and philosophy, he has restored an ethical dimension to the discussion of vital economic problems," the citation read.

This had opened up new fields of study for subsequent generations of researchers.

Much of his work on individual values and collective decisions tackled the problem that when opinions on choices to be made by society differed, methods were needed to bring together "different opinions in decisions which concern everyone," given that imposition of a majority view had "serious deficiencies."

One of his key works on this subject was "Collective Choice and Social Welfare" published in 1970.

Much of his work concerning development economics has concerned the welfare of "the poorest people in society."

One of his best-known books, published in 1981: "Poverty and Famines" challenged the common view that a shortage of food is the most important (sometimes the only) explanation of famine.

After studying famine catastrophes in India, Bangladesh and Saharan countries from the 1940s onwards, he found that other factors were at work.

He noted that famines had occurred even when the supply of food was not significantly lower than in previous years, or that famine-stricken areas have sometimes exported food.

"Sen shows that a profound understanding of famine requires a thorough analysis of how various social and economic factors influence different groups in society and determine their actual opportunities," the jury said.

In later works he attempted to explain how famine could be prevented and how the effects could be limited.

Princeton University economics professor Kenneth Rogoff, who is visiting the London School of Economics, described Sen as a "great scholar and a philosopher" who richly deserved the "magnificent prize."

Rogoff said that Sen's emphasis was on "issues of equality and fairness rather than productive efficiency."

It was the 30th time that the Nobel Economics Prize has been awarded. The United States is far ahead with 27 citations, followed by Britain (7), Norway and Sweden (2) and India, Germany, France, The Netherlands and the former Soviet Union with one apiece.

The economics prize is the baby brother of the six Nobels having been established and funded in 1968 by Sweden's Central Bank to commemorate its tricentennial. It was first awarded in 1969.

The first Nobel prizes — for physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, peace and literature — were awarded in 1901 and were funded by Nobel's estate.

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India's Amartya Sen, pictured in this June 16, 1997, file photo, won the 1998 Nobel Economics Prize for his contributions to welfare economics, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said. Sen, born in Bengal in 1933 and still an Indian citizen, left his professorship in economics and philosophy at Harvard University this year to become master of Trinity College, Cambridge (Reuters photo)

Holbrooke determined to ensure Milosevic complies

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States is determined to ensure that Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic lives up to an agreement to end a crisis that brought NATO "to the brink of war," U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke said Wednesday.

After days of marathon negotiations that took place against a backdrop of a NATO buildup, Holbrooke and Milosevic came away with an agreement to end the bloodshed in the majority Albanian province of Kosovo.

"We were at the brink of war a week ago when we started out on our mission. I thought we would probably be at war by now. We are not," said Holbrooke as he defended the agreement on CNN.

"If it doesn't work, we'll be back at the brink again," he said.

There has been scepticism that Milosevic would live up to the accord.

The headline leader was forced to make enormous concessions such as allowing an Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission into Kosovo and letting unarmed aircraft fly over its territory to verify that it was ending its crackdown on separatists.

"It's going to be a tough, intrusive thing," he said.

"We will have people in every corner of Kosovo. We'll know what's going on. If he does not comply, I think NATO has proved that by going to the brink, and we'll go back if we have to," he said.

Holbrooke also said that relief supplies should resume flowing into Kosovo, where untold thousands of people have fled their homes despite the coming of winter.

The next step will be for Milosevic to sign the two

agreements reached, one with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the other with the OSCE. Holbrooke said he expected both to be signed this week.

Asked about troop withdrawals, Holbrooke replied: "He says he's pulled his troops out already. To tell you the truth he has reduced his troops significantly in the last two weeks but that's a shell game."

"It isn't what he does in the next 24 hours on the troops that is the only key thing. It is that he takes them out and keeps them out," he said.

"We came to the brink of war, the most serious war crisis since the end of the cold war, since the height of the cold war," he said.

"Our war planes are still standing by on the runways in Italy and other places in Europe," he said.

MOSCOW (AP) — Dozens of hungry bears facing a poor mushroom and berry crop in northern Siberia have migrated south and killed at least two people and 19 cattle this autumn, a news report said Wednesday. A 62-year-old man was mauled to death just outside a town in the Novosibirsk region, and a 68-year-old woman from the same town was attacked last month, forest officials said Wednesday, according to the ITAR-TASS news agency. The brown bears have attacked domestic animals, too, killing 19 cattle this season. Police have arranged special hunting squads and are cruising the area with a helicopter to look for the bears, the report said.

Swiss woman drowns, another in coma, trying to rescue dog

BASLE, Switzerland (AFP) — A woman drowned and a second person was still in a coma Wednesday after a dramatic attempt to rescue a dog from the chilly waters of a river in eastern Switzerland, cantonal police said. The owner of the Labrador died Tuesday while attempting to save her dog which had jumped into the cold-water currents of the Wiese river, a tributary of the Rhine. Her companion jumped in after she saw her friend in difficulty. A policeman managed to get the two women to the river bank, while the dog, very much alive, trotted out of the water without help. The dog owner died and her friend was hospitalised in critical condition, according to the police. The German-language newspaper Blick reported the drama Wednesday, recalling that several years ago a policeman drowned in the same spot trying to save a goose.

Swedish police chasing robber in chicken suit

STOCKHOLM (R) — Swedish police were pursuing a man Wednesday who tried to rob a post office dressed in a chicken suit. Police said the robber, disguised in a yellow chicken outfit and wielding a baseball bat, failed to steal any money from the post office in Kalmar, southern Sweden. However, the attacker smashed windows and seriously upset a female cashier. "She's now psychologically disturbed by the event and undergoing treatment," a Kalmar police spokesman told Reuters.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Britain condemns banning of two Yugoslav newspapers

LONDON (AFP) — Britain Wednesday condemned as an "act of dictatorship" the decision by the Yugoslav government to ban two independent newspapers. Belgrade radio B92 reported earlier that the independent Yugoslav daily Dnevni Telegraph (Daily Telegraph), was banned and its assets "temporarily" seized on the orders of the Serbian information ministry overnight Tuesday. This followed the banning of the daily Danas (Today) earlier in the week. Both were said to have "violated" a government decree outlawing use of foreign media reports deemed "harmful to the interests of the country." Wednesday Prime Minister Tony Blair's office at 10 Downing Street issued a statement describing the operation as "the action of a dictatorship not a democracy." A spokesman continued: "It will affect Yugoslavia's wider relationship with the international community. We pay tribute to those Serb journalists, academics and human rights organisations who have been brave enough to speak out against what has been happening in Yugoslavia." The spokesman added that Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic "should be under no illusion" that Britain would not be convinced of his stated intent to "compromise on Kosovo" until actions followed words. "Nor should he think that progress on Kosovo gives him a green light to crack down on internal dissent in Serbia," the spokesman said.

Turkish offer could relaunch Romanian helicopter deal

BUCHAREST (AFP) — Romanian Premier Radu Vasile said Wednesday that a Turkish offer to buy 120 helicopters could revive a deal with U.S. armaker Bell Helicopters which had been grounded for financial reasons. "Turkey has decided to send a team of experts to study the possibility of buying 120 helicopters, which completely changes the sums," he said on return from a summit in Antalya, Turkey. Talks on the helicopter deal have been stalled due to a clause obliging Bucharest to buy the first 96 aircraft, which are to be built in Romania, at a cost of \$1.5 billion. Vasile said on Oct. 5 that it would be "crazy" for Bucharest to sign the \$1.5 billion U.S. aircraft deal, in view of its current budgetary constraints. Romania already is scheduled to repay nearly \$2 billion in debt, while the contract with Bell Helicopters, criticised by the IMF, would further increase its external debt. Turkish Defence Minister Ismet Sezgin indicated in April that Ankara was planning to buy U.S. helicopters built in Romania. Nicolae Banea, head of IAR Ghimbav, the Romanian company which would partner Bell in the contract, agreed that "Turkey's political decision to choose Romanian for its attack helicopters will save the contract."

Golden chastity belt stolen from palace in Indonesia

JAKARTA (AP) — Thieves have stolen the surviving part of an ancient golden chastity belt from a palace in Solo, a member of the city's royal family said Wednesday. The rare antique was one of four displayed in a glass case in a museum at the kraton, or palace, of Mangkunegara IX, one of two traditional rulers of the city of about 2 million people about 400 kilometres east of Jakarta. Tranggono, a member of the royal household, said the semicircular piece was made from one kilogramme of gold and dates back to the 13th century, when it was worn by a wife of a king. Originally it was strapped on with leather. According to folklore, either the king made his queen wear it out of jealousy or she wore it voluntarily as protection against rape. Tranggono said museum workers discovered the piece was missing Sunday. He said he had no idea how much it was worth. "I don't think the thieves will melt it down. I think they'll sell it to a collector," he said.

British bank tells woman she owes \$206 billion

LONDON (R) — Briton Liz Seymour knew when she returned from holiday that her bank account might be slightly overdrawn. But she was horrified to find a letter from the TSB bank demanding immediate repayment of £121 billion (\$206 billion), more than a third of the national debt. The letter — reproduced in Wednesday's Sun newspaper — also informed her that she would be charged £2.5 billion a month in interest until she paid up. A TSB spokesman apologised for the letter, saying an administrative error had been to blame.

Bears attack people, cows in Siberia

MOSCOW (AP) — Dozens of hungry bears facing a poor mushroom and berry crop in northern Siberia have migrated south and killed at least two people and 19 cattle this autumn, a news report said Wednesday. A 62-year-old man was mauled to death just outside a town in the Novosibirsk region, and a 68-year-old woman from the same town was attacked last month, forest officials said Wednesday, according to the ITAR-TASS news agency. The brown bears have attacked domestic animals, too, killing 19 cattle this season. Police have arranged special hunting squads and are cruising the area with a helicopter to look for the bears, the report said.

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Mandela urges measures for workers to stop farm violence

BOTHAVILLE, South Africa (AFP) — President Nelson Mandela Wednesday urged better treatment for farm workers as a means to help reduce rural crime, which has seen more than 100 farmers killed this year alone.

Speaking in this farming town in South Africa's Free State province, Mandela said a rural safety and security summit held at the weekend had laid a sound basis for stabilising the situation on farms.

The summit involving government, labour and organised agriculture, held Saturday at Midrand near Johannesburg, adopted a 10-point plan to address the

problem of attacks on farms which has seen more than 500 farmers killed in the past four years.

Central to the plan is a commando scheme under which farmers receive part-time military training, are issued with weapons by the army, and are on constant alert should an incident occur in their area.

At Saturday's summit, Mandela said ill-treatment of farmworkers by farmers had exacerbated the crime situation in rural areas.

Wednesday, he told farmers they, together with government, needed to commit themselves to "doing everything in our power to stop

that kind of violence."

"Efforts to secure more stable farming environments by normalising labour relations and providing security for workers will make an important contribution," Mandela said, according to the SAPA news agency.

"We have all been disturbed of late to hear about the increasing violent attacks on farmers," he added.

In the Bothaville area, no less than five separate attacks had taken place in the past year.

While the rural summit had laid a sound foundation, the problem of crime on farms, as elsewhere, demanded long-term solutions.

As part of the Sound and Light Program organized by
Tourism and Antiquities
Noor Al Hussein Foundation
The National Music Conservatory
presents
Jerash Popular Arts Group
in
A Musical Evening of Popular Jordanian
The evening is followed by the Sound and Light Show
(Narration of the history of Jerash coupled by sound and light show)
Saturday, 17 October 1998-6:30 p.m.
Sound and Light Program-Jerash
Ticket price: JD 14 (including a light show)
Transportation by bus from Amman to
Jerash and back is available for JD 2
Tickets available at:
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No reward for extremists

KILLING INNOCENT people whether Israelis or Palestinians is always condemnable. But to murder people on the eve of the Washington summit between President Bill Clinton, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is doubly painful as well as damaging. That is why the murder of a Jew near Jerusalem ostensibly at the hands of a Palestinian assumes bigger proportions even though Israelis themselves have also been equally insensitive to Palestinian life on so many occasions in the past. Taking lives especially at critical junctures in the peace process could be a carefully calculated move by groups opposed to the peace process as a matter of principle.

The timing of such killings suggests that the prime motivation behind them is to torpedo whatever chances still exist for making progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track of the peace process. But rewarding such actions by declaring, on the eve of the Washington peace talks, that there is no chance whatsoever for waging peace or reaching an agreement is exactly what the killers from both sides aim for. Should the parties then play into the hands of the enemies of peace? This is exactly what Netanyahu seems to be doing only one day before his departure for the U.S. By ruling out any prospect for a successful encounter in Washington, the Israeli leader is simply rewarding the enemies of peace and punishing all of us who yearn for a successful summit.

Instead of taking this defeatist path, both sides should endeavour to apprehend the extremists who preach and practise violence to sustain themselves and promote their own agendas. The killer or killers of the Israeli youth can and should be brought to justice. So must the killers of Palestinians who fell to Israeli gunfire over the past few weeks. There is no sense in calling on the Palestinian side to fulfil its duties in combating terrorism at a time when scores of Palestinians are also murdered in cold blood. This quid pro quo should be on the top of the summit's agenda so that the climate in the area ceases to be poisoned every time we seem to get closer to a deal.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Dustour's Yaquob Jaber Wednesday strongly criticised Turkey for its threats against Syria noting that Ankara is trying to divert attention from internal issues by directing its people's attention to an external issue. In the south-eastern parts of Turkey there are 10 million Kurds struggling to gain their human rights in the face of Turkish repression and furthermore Turkey is facing a rising Islamic power which is challenging the military-ruled country, the writer pointed out. He said that by threatening Syria and scoffing at any Arab country that might provide backing for Damascus in the event of a Turkish attack, the Turkish leaders have crossed a red line in their relations with the Arab World. The present government in Ankara is beset by many domestic problems but these cannot be solved by creating further tension or engaging in an armed conflict with its neighbours, he concluded.

Al Ra'i's Sultan Al Hattab said that the Jordanians are in the same boat as the Palestinians confronting Israeli defiance and intransigence in connection with the peace process which the Israelis have brought to a standstill. The Jordanians have joined the peace process in the hope that it would culminate with a comprehensive settlement on all fronts, while the Palestinians have been struggling against repressive Israeli measures and persisted in their steadfastness in the hope that they will eventually gain their legitimate rights, said the writer. He said that while the Palestinians have decided to go to the summit in Washington, the Israeli leaders have been trying to find more and more excuses to escape any agreement with the Palestinians on the withdrawal of their troops from the West Bank. He said by appointing Sharon as foreign minister and a member of the negotiating team in Washington, Israel is giving the world a clear signal of its intentions.

View from Academia

On religion, dialogue and Jordan's pivotal role

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

THE OTHER DAY (last Monday), I sat down wearily at the end of a particularly hectic day aiming to spend a lazy but pleasurable half hour perusing the day's stories and articles in the Jordan Times when I was struck by a picture on the front page. You have to see the picture, the only one on the page, to appreciate its effect.

It was of eleven men, all dressed in black. Ten of them wore collared costumes (with red buttons and wide red belts or red ribbons dangling from the collars to the waist) and medium-size crosses. The man standing in the middle wore a suit and tie. The ten men, Christian, were identified as patriarchs of the Roman Catholic Church, holding a conference in Amman. The eleventh, a Muslim, was no other than HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent — the host of the visitors.

The picture is quite striking. The round and oval faces, as if emerging from one collective costume (the black dresses mingle, interconnect, and almost melt into one), look extremely comfortable and peaceful, though they are somewhat solemn and formal. A casual, carefree observer may not find much in it. But to a careful observer, it is immensely telling.

For one thing, it stands in sharp contrast with many of the other sombre, depressing headlines on the front page, inside the paper and on the last page: "Turkey issues fresh warning to Syria"; "Israeli, Palestinian leaders give bleak assessments ahead of peace summit"; "Netanyahu blames Palestinian 'incitement' for soldier's killing"; "Plans to establish Maronite parish in Amman stir controversy"; "Christian group prays for no concessions to Palestinians"; "Cohen plays down concern on Sharon's post"; "Israel defends shooting of journalist"; "Butler: Iraq has always lied on VX gas"; "Turkish police arrest 200 Islamist demonstrators"; "Jewish leaders slam Pope on canonisation"; and so forth.

Unlike the messages conveyed in these headlines, the picture incarnates the spirit of toleration, inter-faith

understanding, open-mindedness, fraternity, peace and harmony. The Crown Prince — a Hashemite, a Muslim, a man proud of his own religion — stands entirely at ease among ten patriarchs belonging to a faith different from his own. Not any sign of discomfort, anxiety, nervousness or inhibition can one detect in the harmonious picture, either on part of the Prince or the patriarchs.

The picture of the eleven men in black is neither purely ceremonial nor merely casual and incidental. Since its very inception in the early days of this century, Jordan has been (due to the liberal vision of its founders and its leadership) a safe haven for people of diverse faiths, diverse political orientations, diverse ethnic backgrounds, diverse origins, etc. Since its inception, Jordan stands out as having done something almost unique in the sphere of religious tolerance.

In recent years, Jordan has done a great deal with respect to inter-faith dialogue — in the Kingdom itself, within our Arab and Middle Eastern region itself and at the global level. Inspired by the excellent example of His Majesty King Hussein (as well as the late King Abdullah), the Crown Prince has initiated, spear-headed and diligently pursued a campaign whose aim is to augment the exchange of ideas among peoples of diverse faiths, especially the three monotheistic religions. Such campaign reflected itself in the creation of research centres, which conduct significant comparative/contrastive studies, and the holding of periodic symposia and conferences on matters of inter-faith concern.

Inter-faith contacts and dialogues could not have come at a better time — not only because they help dispel misconceptions, scepticism and mistrust among peoples of various faiths but because we have, in recent years, witnessed the rise of various nasty forms of religious extremism, radicalism and violence. The effective remedy to the so-called phenomenon of religious extremism, terrorism, and violence in our region and abroad lies not in the

repression or suppression of this or that group or sect but in sincere, open-minded dialogue.

What happened in Bosnia not long ago (race-based, but also somewhat faith-based) was not a pretty thing; what is happening in Kosovo now (along the exact same lines) is not a pretty thing either. What happened in Lebanon a few years ago, sectarian narrow-mindedness had a lot to do with it. The chilling violence in Algeria, committed in the name of religion or blamed on it (you never know) is tragic.

Religious extremism, radicalism, and selfishness also stand in the way of Mideast peace. Peace with the Palestinians has come to a halt, due (in great part) to many of the extremist religious groups in Israel, some of whom (the settlers) confiscate Palestinian land and live on it with no respect whatsoever of the rights or feelings of Palestinians, their fellow human beings. It is one of these Jewish fanatics who committed a horrible massacre in Hebron not long ago, and one of them who assassinated the soldier turned peacemaker, Rabin. Rather than facilitate and push for peace, religion aborts it. Which is very ironic and unfortunate.

The front-page Jordan Times picture represents the antithesis to religious chauvinism, selfishness, bigotry, hypocrisy and destructiveness — an antithesis we wish to see more of. It is only through understanding, toleration, complementarity, dialogue and love among people of various faiths that coexistence and peace among God's creatures can be guaranteed. Jordan ought to pride itself on initiating an important inter-faith dialogue, the only means for peaceful, dignified living and the only guarantee for nonviolence.

The only reservation about the picture may come from a feminist who may wonder why there is not a single woman in the picture. But this reservation has to be taken up with the patriarchs of the church, not with the Crown Prince.

There's more to modernity but are we prepared to take that step?

By Natasha Bukhari

THERE SEEMS to be some confusion over how to go about modernising our country, where to start, and what example to follow, especially when "modern" is conceived to be equivalent to "Western" in a fast growing invasion and adoption of Western values in our society.

We in Jordan have indeed succeeded in certain areas of global modernisation as we are slowly, but successfully, becoming technologically more advanced, which, one must admit, has become a necessity to keep up with the rest of the world. This is something we are working on and have, given our limited resources, significantly moved forward in.

The new generation of Jordanians have access to computers and the Internet, and some are heavily involved in cyber communication. Computer science is being taught at a good number of schools and the computer is invading a good number of our homes and work places.

On another front, we are witnessing an impressive growth in the number of bars and nightclubs, which are becoming the youths' havens for having "a good time." In fact, drinking and dancing are — for that lucky minority of Jordanians who can afford it — the only type of fun available in this country. One might argue that this is one of the faces of modern Jordan, when, in fact, it is an example of lack of choices. We have imported the culture of modern

entertainment from the West, without trying to create or cultivate our own. This leap towards pop music and "party" was not, unfortunately, preceded by or even accompanied with an evolution in our own theatre, art or music.

Art and entertainment are not the only areas we are lacking in, but there are numerous other manifestations of backwardness in our society.

'Nightclubs, computer skills or attire do not entail modernisation: values do'

Some are so grave that one is left wondering about the accurate terminology to label this society; is it modern, is it backward or is it just confused?

An example that comes to mind is the phenomenon of "honour crimes." How can one explain "honour killings," or even more distressing, the lack of punishment for such disgusting crimes? In what modern state do murderers get away with a few months of imprisonment for

killing a spouse, sister or daughter?

Murderers get off the hook for being "enraged" when they commit "honour crimes," we often read. Well, if rage excuses murder, then all citizens should be allowed to justify their actions by their state of mind or moods at the time. As long as we have such precedents to excuse a certain type of murders, many others are sure to follow. One person could argue that he/she crossed a red traffic light because he/she was distressed at the time, and demand not to be punished for endangering others' lives. If anger and rage justify killing a fellow human, then they can be used to justify almost any crime on earth.

I think that it is time for us to question our priorities when it comes to modernising our country. It is time to reassess our values and work our way up rather than skip the substantial issues and focus on the superficial manifestations of modernisation.

Nightclubs, computer skills or attire do not entail modernisation: values do.

As long as we have a system that encourages a hideous crime by not punishing it, we will have no chance of rising up to the challenge of modernisation. How can we claim to be modern when our laws do not respect human life?

The writer is currently a correspondent for foreign news agencies based in Amman.

LETTERS
Pure sensationalism

To the editor:

THE REPORT, reprinted in the Jordan Times on October 13, from the Independent, entitled "The Water Project that could be poisoning half of Bangladesh" sensationalised a serious public health problem.

The government of Bangladesh, with the support from UNICEF and other donors, started sinking tubewells over 25 years ago as an alternative to pond and river water which was often heavily contaminated by faecal bacteria. The ingestion of untreated or inadequately treated water can cause cholera, diarrhoea and parasite infection.

These tubewells, along with an increase in sanitation have contributed in saving lives. In 1990, more than a quarter of a million of Bangladeshi children under the age of five died as a result of diarrhoea, the biggest child-killer in Bangladesh. By 1996 the number of children who died had fallen down to 110,000.

UNICEF — together with the Bangladeshi government, the World Bank and other international donor agencies — is tackling arsenic poisoning in several ways.

1. Testing and improving local testing in the future. The Department of Public Health and Environment (DPHE) and selected NGO's have been trained and equipped to conduct tests to ensure that no Bangladeshi is knowingly exposed to dangerous levels of arsenic, in addition to strengthening local capacity to produce arsenic field test kit, currently imported from other countries.

2. Replacing affected wells and supporting the installation of 18,000 arsenic-free new tubewells across the country.

3. Carrying out grass root public education which involves informing families and communities of the risks they face from arsenic and steps they can take to protect their health.

4. Providing funding and technical help to test tubewells and to promote alternatives such as rainwater harvesting and low-cost filtration system that remove arsenic, and other contamination from the water.

Misrak Elias,
 UNICEF Representative,
 Jordan Country Office.

Riad Al Khouri

Developing World

Be our guests

THE INTERIOR minister's statement last week that the number of foreign workers in Jordan is equal to the number of Jordanians in the country's domestic workforce should come as no surprise. Myriad Egyptians, Syrians, Iraqis and others resident in Jordan, including some non-Arab workers, are simply doing the jobs Jordanians don't want, a labour market pattern familiar in the Arab World.

Traditionally, these "guest workers" from Arab states have been welcome in Amman. The minister talked about Jordan's usual "openness" with regard to Arab visitors who need no visa to enter the Kingdom. He added, however, that Jordan would apply existing laws it had not fully enforced in the past to crack down on illegal workers. However, he insisted that Jordan will "stick to labour-exchange agreements" with other countries and "preserve the rights" of legal workers.

Fair enough: Jordanian rules in this regard are reasonable, and their application will also no doubt be tempered politically. Jordan has always been tolerant when it comes to issues which do not impinge directly on its national security, and I predict that this time will be no exception: the Kingdom's Arab guests — and many of its foreign ones as well — will still largely be here in the coming months and years. If on the other hand, members of the non-Jordanian Arab workforce of Amman started to riot to protest Jordan's relations with a non-

Arab state such as, say, Ruritania, they would be expelled before you could say "normalisation." The state's message to non-Jordanians is clear: stay away from political issues; otherwise, if you don't actually commit a felony, be our guest. Of course that was a lot easier to say when the economy was booming a decade or two ago, and unemployment was not an issue. The trick of course is to bring down unemployment; once that happens, a lot of the headaches regarding guest workers will disappear.

Now for the tricky part: commenting on Jordanian unemployment and the guest worker issue, the prime minister said that "bold measures" to combat poverty and unemployment among Jordanians would be taken, and that work would begin to introduce a minimum wage. If this happens in an unemployment crisis like Jordan's present one, look out. Such a measure would be disastrous if enforced — though it would probably be unenforceable. Most foreign workers in Jordan work for far lower wages than Jordanians, thus making businesses run. An argument can be made for Jordan to abandon its cheap-labour economic model, but this will mean massive restructuring, retraining, and retrenchment in the labour market and elsewhere in the economy. Meanwhile the minimum wage idea is virtually impossible in a country wallowing in economic crisis. Once the economy picks up, through a combination of the right exogenous factors (compre-

hensive regional peace) and an internal attempt to improve the investment climate (to a considerable extent a function of the Jordanian government's deregulation of the economy) measures like a minimum wage will have a chance. Whether one should be imposed or not is another question: my point is that it would be impossible to apply under the present circumstances.

Until annual GNP growth goes back to the seven per cent or so which will allow new entrants to the labour market to be absorbed, a minimum wage applied to Jordan is a bit like prescribing sophisticated organic diets to somebody who is in a coma: he has to be revived first before he can get the fancy medicine.

Until then, Jordan and other Arab countries should concentrate more on economic liberalisation than on interference with markets, including those for labour. I say "other Arab countries" because the simultaneous existence of unemployment and guest workers also exist elsewhere in the region. Take for example Saudi Arabia, where that country's interior minister recently said the country was paying a "high price" for foreign workers and urged Saudis not to shun any job offered to them. The minister, Prince Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz, told a meeting of Saudi businessmen last week that the kingdom was taking steps to ensure more Saudis take up jobs currently held by foreigners and said authorities may soon announce new measures to boost the employment of nationals. "We appreciate

those who come to our country and work with us. But, of course, we pay a price for those who come from abroad and it is a very high price," the minister said.

He expressed the hope that Saudi nationals would work in all fields and not shun any job, and explained that if Saudis turned down those jobs, non-Saudis must take them. Saudi Arabia is eager to replace many of the estimated six million foreign workers, who make up one-third of the country's population, with its nationals. The government has told private firms employing more than twenty people to increase their Saudi staff by five per cent a year. In my opinion, this would be as unenforceable as a Jordanian minimum wage under the present circumstances. With the Saudi economy still largely dependent on oil, and with petroleum prices stagnating badly, such measures may be difficult to take.

The lesson which has yet to be learned by many government officials in the Arab World is that interference with markets is tricky and should be done rarely and very carefully. Minimum wages and statutory employment of nationals are steps which can be undertaken only under certain circumstances, preferably accompanied by other measures which would ease economic distortions instead of aggravating them. Otherwise, the rule must be to leave markets alone: whether in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, or elsewhere, the government's role in the economy has to shrink, and not to expand through more regulation.

Primakov promises wages, pensions as aides work on the funding

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Municipality of Greater Amman envisages JD3.9 million deficit in '99

THE BOARD of the Greater Amman Municipality has approved a JD67.6 million budget for 1999, envisaging a JD3.9 million deficit as revenues were estimated to total JD63.7 million. The municipality projected receiving JD22.1 million through government channels, JD30.1 million through various fees that will be collected by the municipality itself and other miscellaneous income.

Most of the revenues that will be collected by the government on behalf of the municipality will be in the form of real estate tax that landlords pay annually on their properties. The amount from this real estate tax was estimated at JD16.5 million whereas the remaining JD5.6 million were projected to come from "fuel charges" which the government also collects.

According to the budget, the municipality will collect, through its own departments, JD4 million from issuing and renewing business licences, JD1.5 million from billboard and signs fees, JD1.1 million from licensing industries and other crafts and JD1.4 million from recovering costs of paving and asphalt roads. Other fees will be collected from slaughterhouses, produce market and the Central Vegetable market. Income will be also flowing from fees on construction licences and fees for collecting garbage in addition to other revenues from rent and land sales.

Salaries, operational expenses will take JD30.1 million of the total expenditure. JD37.5 million will be earmarked as capital expenditures as they will cover the municipality's development projects and repayment of loans. (Al Arab)

Large housing projects seen shifting demand for real estate to northwest Amman

DEMAND FOR real estate is shifting towards the northwest of the capital, within the area of the Municipality of Greater Amman, real estate businessman Mohamad Adwan told Al Arab Al Yawm. He attributed the interest in that part of the city to large housing projects being set up or planned by most government civil servant such as doctors and engineers. He said investors were also moving on areas outside the ring road around Amman as prices there were low and expected to gradually rise.

Adwan indicated that many investors were implicated by purchasing land in the southern and Dead Sea areas of the country especially after signing the peace accord. He said

such deals activated the market for a short period only as they were not based on good knowledge and judgement.

The businessman saw the decline in real estate activity as normal in light of the present political and economic conditions. "Many people are used to continued activity in real estate trading and that is why they are dismayed by the current situation," he said. He criticised the absence of control on the profession of real estate brokers and noted that many persons who have entered this sector without any sufficient experience or knowledge have negatively reflected on the credibility of the brokers and ethics of the business. (Al Arab Al Yawm)

Alstom wins \$218m power station contract in Turkey

ANKARA (AFP) — French energy and engineering group Alstom has won a \$218-million contract to build a coal-run power station in Can, western Turkey.

French trade secretary of state Jacques Donoux announced here Wednesday.

Construction of the plant, which will be equipped with technology to reduce sulfur emissions, will begin this year and will be complete by 2002, he said, stressing the "exemplary" relations between Turkey and France after a meeting with Turkish Energy Minister Mustafa Ersumer.

France was the second-biggest foreign investor in Turkey in 1996, after the Netherlands. Franco-Turkey trade amounted to 4.4 billion dollars in 1997.

Jordan Times

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JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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DATE 12 MONTHS		COMPANY'S NAME	P / S	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE
HIGH	LOW				SHARES	OF	TRADED	PRICE	PRICE	
\$ 355,500	170,000	ARAB BANK	17.0	.96	24	470	97450	206.50	207.50	1.00+
1,920	1,500	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	12.3	4.64	4	13350	20046	1.50	1.51	.01+
\$ 3,200	1,000	BANK OF JORDAN	8	0.00	25	51286	56185	1.14	1.08	-.06-
\$ 1,300	.870	MID. EAST INV. BK.	56.5	0.00	1	100	86	.88	.86	-.02-
\$ 6,510	2,610	THE MIDDLE EAST	17.7	3.57	13	7561	21178	2.83	2.80	-.03-
800	530	JOR. CIP BANK	0.00	14	21788	12418	.58	.57	.01-	
\$ 4,190	1,920	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	38.6	1.63	1	100	146	1.60	1.60	.00
\$ 3,910	1,670	JOR. INVESTMENT BANK	16.8	0.00	16	3614	6017	1.68	1.65	-.03-
1,220	.900	TRICOM BK. SAV. INV.	8	0.00	1	150	135	.90	.90	.00
\$ 1,970	.710	BEIT AL-HAQ (BETHA)	1.4	0.00	2	250	175	.72	.70	-.02-
850	.600	PHILADELPHIA INV. BK.	8	0.00	11	2253	1463	.66	.65	-.01-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 272.92 CHG: +0.17 113 101027 215542										
\$ 1,700	1,630	MATL. AMMA INSUR.	26.5	0.00	1	10000	16000	1.65	1.60	-.05-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 127.77 CHG: 0.00 1 10000 16000										
\$ 2,240	1,410	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.2	5.82	8	2150	3053	1.42	1.42	.00
\$ 7,460	1,950	VEHICLES OWNERS FED.	8.6	5.71	1	100	210	2.05	2.10	.05+
\$ 2,600	1,540	SHIPPING LINES	51.6	5.48	1	100	146	1.54	1.46	-.08-
1,300	650	MATL. PORTFOLIO	25.9	0.00	8	10669	6444	.65	.65	.00
\$ 590	.270	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	9	0.00	5	2100	146	.27	.28	.01+
\$ 1,380	1,060	MID. EAST HOTELS	9	0.00	1	500	540	1.08	1.08	.00
\$ 4,600	2,870	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.1	2.13	4	500	940	1.89	1.88	-.01-
1,790	1,060	UNITED CO.	4.7	10.28	6	1200	1284	1.07	1.07	.00
\$ 780	.500	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	150	72	.50	.48	-.02-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 104.32 CHG: -0.49 35 17469 13435										
\$ 4,110	1,230	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	13.7	0.00	1	200	258	1.36	1.29	-.07-
\$ 4,500	3,700	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.4	6.67	4	24500	8503	3.70	3.53	-.17-
\$ 11,250	10,050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.1	8.59	1	80	828	10.40	10.35	-.05-
\$ 1,570	1,000	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	12.1	7.14	1	50	50	1.00	1.00	.00
\$ 1,610	1,060	INDUSTRIAL CORP. AG.	67.4	0.00	1	100	114	1.05	1.14	.09+
\$ 7,350	5,500	JOR. WOODST. IND.	7.4	3.54	1	100	565	5.70	5.65	-.05-
\$ 5,740	2,400	ARAB PHARM. IND.	6.5	3.13	29	18497	37194	2.42	2.40	-.02-
\$ 5,000	1,050	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	4.5	9.71	3	650	670	1.05	1.03	-.02-
\$ 1,440	1,020	JOR. PAPER MANUFACT.	8.6	9.62	2	3663	3677	1.07	1.04	-.03-
\$ 2,550	1,370	GENERAL MINING	7.4	4.90	1	100	143	1.51	1.43	-.08-
\$ 8,540	6,500	ARAB CHEM. DISTR.	7.4	7.52	1	50	333	6.75	6.65	-.10-
\$ 6,350	4,700	ARAB ALUMIN. IND.	13.1	6.84	4	400	3072	5.16	5.12	-.04-
\$ 2,980	1,700	ARAB ALUM. IND.	13.1	14.12	4	2773	4907	1.78	1.77	-.01-
\$ 530	.370	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	12.5	0.00	6	4700	1739	.37	.37	.00
\$ 790	.370	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	1	100	56	.35	.36	.01+
\$ 570	.280	UPPERED PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	16	28750	8445	.30	.29	-.01-
\$ 650	.340	JOR. ROCKWOOL IND.	9	0.00	1	500	170	.34	.34	.00
\$ 1,760	.760	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	10.6	7.69	7	1000	1075	1.10	1.04	-.06-
\$ 5,100	4,410	JOR. WOOD IND. UNICO	23.1	2.35	1	1000	425	4.47	4.25	-.22-
\$ 690	.370	JOR. SULPHUR CHEM	7.0	0.00	3	1000	370	.37	.37	.00
\$ 650	.390	KAMHAR INVEST.	9	0.00	3	950	364	.60	.59	-.01-
\$ 1,260	.530	UNIV. WOOD IND.	9.9	9.68	6	5600	1472	.62	.62	.00
\$ 1,110	.600	JOR. WOOD INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	6	1250	1605	.50	.49	-.01-
\$ 1,540	1,200	MATL. CHAROLINE	8.6	8.13	4	2000	2459	1.23	1.23	.00
\$ 1,080	.600	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	8.9	15.87	2	2850	1796	.63	.63	.00
\$ 1,560	1,150	EL - BAY READY WEAR	41.3	0.00	1	920	928	1.25	1.23	-.02-
\$ 1,310	.910	INTL. TOBACCO	7.2	5.66	19	30200	31087	1.03	1.03	.00
\$ 890	.660	JORDAN STEEL	9.7	8.05	4	9200	8004	.86	.87	.01+
\$ 730	.580	NAT. ALUMINUM	32.2	0.00	11	7517	4886	.66	.65	-.01-
\$ 670	.520	MID. EAST COMPLEX	9.4	0.00	6	3495	1817	.52	.52	.00
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 72.78 CHG: -2.45 161 150325 207209										
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 163.96 CHG: -0.47 310 278821 452186										

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) The moon's in Virgo, helping you focus on the little stuff by making it even more important than usual. Aries may be the sign of the warrior, but remember that part in basic training where they make you fold your underwear into a precise four-inch square? That's the kind of stuff you'll do today. Might as well do it on purpose.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You and your sweetheart have lots to talk about, and many plans for the future to be made. Some of those ideas look impossible right now, but don't let that stop you. When you two get motivated and work together, anything is possible. It might take a little longer, but that's OK. You've got the whole rest of your lives.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) It's possible that your house could stand a little tidying up. You want to go play with your friends, and you'll find time to do a little of that, but don't waste the whole day on social activities. It's kind of important that you take care of your domestic chores, too. You'll see why this weekend.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) A little more education is required before you reach what you're after. The process is like a ladder, with each rung another skill you've acquired or bit of information you've collected. Today, you get to go on a scavenger hunt for more of the above. Be aggressive about it. Don't wait for it to come to you.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Money is coming in today, possibly as a reward for your previous brilliance. Some of it has been generated by work you've done, and some could be a gift. You don't have to just sit there and wait for it to happen. You could remind people of money they owe you, too. That's not cheating.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You're so strong and decisive today you might surprise people who thought you were a pushover. You try to take care of others, even if it means going without something you wanted. That's being a nice guy, but some see it as weakness. Well, they're being critical today, because today you're going after what you want.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You promised you'd

do lunch, remember? The person you said that to is still waiting. He or she has left the brown bag with the sandwich in it at home for several weeks now, waiting for your call, and is now wondering if you really care. Since you do, call.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You may be feeling under pressure, but friends can help. Don't try to do everything by yourself. Sometimes you think you should, because you can do it best. In this case, it's ridiculous, however. You'd just get all stressed out, and the job might not get done anyway. Best to get a team on board.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You may feel compelled to tell your boss exactly what you think. Well, maybe you should. If you have a good idea about how to make the business prosper, definitely get it out. If you present solutions instead of complaining about problems, your behavior could earn you a promotion, instead of getting you fired. Go for it.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If you're looking for love, try looking at your local college campus. It's also an excellent day to sign up for a class. Love and higher education are linked, and it looks like it could be fun. Structure is required, of course, but that's not a problem. Structure is your middle name.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You should be planning for your future. No one else is going to do it for you, no matter what they say. If you trust them with your life, what happens if they can't follow through? They might have the best intentions, but you're left stranded. It doesn't hurt to have your own stash of cash. Continue working on that.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You generally like to handle tough jobs by yourself, but today, let somebody else do the part you find most tedious. If you pick the right person, they'll see it as a blessing. Just because a job is hard for you doesn't mean it's hard for everyone. For some people, it's like a vacation. That's the one you want to find, obviously.

Birthstone of September: Opal — Tourmaline

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You might as well polish up your act, because you are drawing a lot of attention. Stand up straight. Look sharp. Well, you always look sharp, but today you need to have that extra touch that shows you really care about your appearance. Be ready for a white glove inspection and you'll impress a person you admire a lot.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) The sun is in Libra and the moon is in Virgo. Romance blossoms again, and that's really neat. Actually, it looks like there's a bit of a problem with your loved one, however. He or she is having a hard time achieving a goal. For you, it looks kind of easy. Don't make fun. Offer helpful advice instead.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Again, there's conflict between responsibility at home and playing out in the world. Looks like you'll get to do a little of both. Your job could be fun right now, and that's fine. You're going job; you're even in line for a promotion. But don't spend all your attention there. Focus on your home and family, too.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) There's a synergistic force in effect today. You're gathering in valuables, changing them in some way and sending them out again. That creates more energy than it uses. You're using up fuel, but you're achieving something you wouldn't have had otherwise. You're making progress, so keep it.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Take part of the income you're generating and put it into a wise investment. Have you saved up enough to make sure your old age is secure and comfortable? If you're a kid, it's even more important to start saving now. Even a little bit will grow into a lot by the time you get to where you need it.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) The opposition is making you stronger, and you're getting more attention than usual. You're stepping out of your old routine, and it's taking people by surprise. They're used to you being invisible, lurking in the shadows and doing what's required. Well, today you're stepping out. You know what? It looks good on you.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You're motivated to

serve a good cause, though most of your work is behind the scenes. There's too much to do, but that's OK. The pressure keeps you going. A child's idea will work, and your work becomes child's play. Divert funds to others and you'll benefit, too. Keep

even the hidden places tidy and a change appears beneficial.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You've been in a major push toward success all week, and it hasn't been easy. Well, it's probably getting easier by now, if you've been getting others on your team. The more the merrier. It might even look like someone else is team captain. That's OK, as long as your advice is the advice that's being followed.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Take action to clinch a career opportunity. If there doesn't seem to be any where you're looking, maybe you're looking in the wrong places. Or, maybe you didn't think you qualify yet for the job you want. Well, guess again. If you can get your foot in the door, you can rise to the challenge.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Although you're lucky, you still have to play by the rules. The good news is that you put some of these rules in place yourself. You've got goals to achieve, and it took perseverance as well as practice to get there. You know what, though? You're one of the few people who actually could make it to Carnegie Hall.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't spend your money on trivia. Invest in something that will help you achieve your goals. This may be as simple as paying off bills. The interest on credit cards amounts to a lot over time, so there's no use saving at 3 per cent if you're paying out 18 or 20 per cent. Use that savings to pay those bills.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Prepare for opposition today by getting all your facts straight. The other person isn't going to care about emotional matters, like how much your feelings were hurt. He or she is going to be dealing with the facts. To keep up with this kind of approach, you're going to have to do some homework.

Birthstone of September: Opal — Tourmaline

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NBA cancels first 2 weeks of season

NEW YORK (AP) — The NBA's perfect record — 35,001 games over 51 seasons, never once interrupted by a strike or lockout — is history.

The league wiped out the first two weeks of the 1998-1999 season Tuesday, canceling regular-season games because of a work stoppage for the first time ever.

The action was taken when collective bargaining talks between owners and players broke off after about 3 1/2 hours of talks.

"My job is to put on games for the fans, not to cancel them. It's terribly disappointing," commissioner David Stern said.

A total of 99 games from Nov. 3 through Nov. 16 will not be played or made up, and the majority of players will miss their first paychecks Nov. 15.

The union put forth an 11th-hour proposal — a luxury tax on players re-signing under the so-called Larry Bird exception — to address the owners' concerns over escalating salaries. But it wasn't enough to save the full 82-game season.

"It's evident we're not going to reach an agreement any time soon, so we are reluctantly canceling the first two weeks," a four-faced deputy commissioner Russ Granik said from a

podium at a midtown Manhattan hotel.

Sitting beside him was Stern, who looked equally grim.

The NBA had been the only major American professional sports league that never lost a game to a labour dispute.

Baseball's disastrous strike of 1994-95 wiped out the World Series, the NHL suffered through a 2 1/2-month lockout that ended in January 1995, and an NFL strike in 1987 lasted about a month.

Two previous NBA lockouts in 1995 and 1996 ended before any games were missed.

The next move in this dispute will come from the owners, who will deliver a counterproposal later this week. Tuesday was the 105th day of the lockout.

"It doesn't look promising," Stern said. "The reality is that the owners had no choice. The union indicated some flexibility, but the reality is that their proposal doesn't completely address what we've focused on."

The sides met for two sessions, one in the morning when the union made its proposal and one in the afternoon after the owners discussed it.

"We players feel we're taking steps to bridge the gap," union president

Patrick Ewing said. "Now the ball is in their court to take steps to get closer to us."

The union's luxury tax proposal would require owners to pay a tax on certain exorbitant contracts such as the \$126 million, six-year extension signed by Kevin Garnett of the Minnesota Timberwolves last year when he was just 20.

A source close to the talks, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the tax would kick in on any contract worth more than \$18 million, with a rate of 50 per cent for the amount over that threshold. If Michael Jordan signed another \$33 million contract, the tax on Chicago owner Jerry Reinsdorf would be \$7.5 million (50 per cent of the \$15 million overage).

Money collected from the luxury tax would be redistributed to low-revenue teams, much like the system baseball owners have adopted.

"I think we definitely surprised them," union director Billy Hunter said. "Our intention was to put something bold on the table."

"The message here is that we're trying. What kind of response they make will determine what kind of progress we can make and whether we can salvage the

rest of the November schedule — or the rest of the season," Hunter said.

Stern said the idea of a tax was something the owners would look at, but by itself it was not enough to stop the league from canceling games.

"We had a somewhat more constructive dialogue, but it's hard to say if we got closer to an agreement," Granik said. "We promised to come back with our own set of proposals."

The owners imposed the lockout July 1, and the summer and early fall passed with the sides meeting only twice for formal bargaining sessions. The talks Tuesday were the third between the sides.

In addition to Ewing, Dikembe Mutombo, Ray Allen, Antonio Davis and John Starks were among the players attending the meeting. Owners were represented by Gordon Gund (Cleveland), Les Alexander (Houston), Abe Pollin (Washington) and David Checketts (New York) and Jerry Colangelo (Phoenix). Both sides are still awaiting a decision from arbitrator John Feerick, dean of Fordham Law School, who will rule by Sunday whether more than 200 players with guaranteed contracts must be paid during the lockout.

In the last labour agreement in 1995, the owners agreed to pay the players between 48 per cent and 51.8 per cent of revenues. If the percentage went higher — and owners claim it reached 57 per cent last season — the owners had the right to toss out the old deal and seek a new one, which they did.

They have demanded "cost certainty" from the players, meaning they want to put an absolute ceiling on the amount of money that can be devoted to payrolls. The union calls such a system a "hard" salary cap and has refused to accept one.

The union had previously proposed a concession slowing the growth of the salary cap from year to year if the amount of money devoted to player salaries exceeded 63 per cent of revenues.

When they made another offer in August, they replaced that "cap credit" with a change in the maximum raise rule, offering to decrease the year-to-year increases in player contracts from a maximum of 20 per cent to 10 per cent.

Their new offer contains both concessions, as well as an agreement to add marijuana to the banned substances list and give teams the right of first refusal for players finishing their three-year rookie contracts.

Moya slumps out in Vienna

VIENNA (R) — French Open champion and World No. 4 Carlos Moya slumped out of the first round of the CA-Trophy in Vienna's Stadthalle on Wednesday, losing to unfancied Czech Bohdan Ulihrach 7-6 6-4.

The 20-year-old Spaniard's game fell apart in his first indoor match of the year, squandering a 4-1 first set lead.

Moya became the second seed to fall, following seventh-seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov's loss to Britain's Greg Rusedski on Tuesday.

Fellow Briton Tim Henman made no mistake on Wednesday, though. The eighth seed cruised to a straightforward 6-3 6-4 win over Swede Magnus Gustafsson.

Henman, who outclassed Andre Agassi in Basle last week for his fourth title, has won 18 of his last 21 matches and returned to the top ten for the second time this week.

"I'm back in the top ten and I want to stay there," he said. "I think I can get a lot higher, especially if I continue serving well. I have also improved my movement."

"I'm pleased with the way I'm playing, but there is still a lot of room for improvement."



Carlos Moya

The 24-year-old, who has just recovered from a cold, served no double faults in the 75 minute match.

He needed just a single break at 5-3 on the indoor carpet to take the first set.

Henman made a quick start to the second, going 3-1 ahead, before claycourt specialist Gustafsson struck back and broke the

British No. 1 to love. But Henman broke back immediately and sealed the win on his second match-point — a thundering ace down the centre line.

Top seed Pete Sampras faces fellow American Jeff Tarango later on Wednesday while U.S. Open champion Pat Rafter, of Australia, tackles Zimbabwean Byron Black.



One of the posters for the Sydney Olympics (file photo)

Official dismisses Olympic economic scare

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australia's tourism chief on Wednesday dismissed fears a world economic recession would sabotage hopes of the 2000 Sydney Olympics generating A\$6 billion (\$3.6 billion) in revenue.

"I don't believe an economic recession will have any impact on the numbers of people coming to Australia," Australian Tourist Commission Managing Director John Morse said.

But he forecast a five per cent drop in visitors to Australia for 1998.

"Mostly because of the economic crisis in South Korea and Indonesia," he said.

He had feared a 12 per cent drop earlier in the year. "We have actually done much better than other countries around the world," he added.

International Olympic Committee Marketing Director Michael Payne said they were getting reports from around the world of massive interest in the Games.

He said travel agents in Europe, South Africa and America were reporting 10 times more interest in the Sydney Games than previous Olympics.

And he defused fears a recession would hit marketing revenue.

"Olympic marketing is a long-term project with companies already signed up, so it's not affected," he said.

He agreed Sydney did not have enough accommodation to meet the demand.

"If you doubled the accommodation you would get double the number of visitors, but it's important you don't start building hotels just for the Games. You have to be able to support it," he said.

Morse said the Games would create an estimated 100,000 new jobs in the tourism industry.

"It's forecast that the publicity surrounding the Olympic Games will bring an extra 1.6 million international visitors to Australia between now and 2004, generating \$6.1 billion in revenue," he said.

Australia told to tighten drug loopholes

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian Olympic Committee President John Coates has called on the government to tighten legal loopholes to help catch cheats bringing performance-enhancing drugs into the country before the 2000 Sydney Games.

Coates was reacting to news that two athletes who brought drugs into Australia were not prosecuted as the drugs were not prohibited under Australian law.

"Trafficking in this country is out of hand and we need governments to have stronger laws and, in this case, customs as well to have a stronger commitment to put the resources there to seriously attack this problem," Coates said Wednesday.

"There's nothing that customs could do because they have not got round to listing these particular drugs."

The Melbourne Age reported last month that customs had scaled back its investigations into the steroid trade.

An international triathlete competing in the world championship in Perth in February was caught with the hormone erythropoietin (EPO) which produces extra red blood cells. Another athlete brought in the testosterone derivative dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA).

Customs Minister Warren Truss refused Wednesday to name the pair.

This contrasts with last January's episode when China's Yuan Yuan was found with a cache of human growth hormone when she arrived at Sydney airport for the world swimming championships.

Yuan and her coach were deported and received tough international sanctions.



U.S. tennis player Corina Morariu is serving a ball during the game against French Sandrine Testud at the European Championships in Kloten, Switzerland (AP Photo)

Van Roost advances as Kournikova serves 17 double faults

ZURICH (AFP) — Dominique Van Roost of Belgium took just 56 minutes to blast Russian teenage star Anna Kournikova out of the \$926,500 WTA Tour event here on Tuesday, but Kournikova aided her own demise by serving an amazing 17 double faults.

Van Roost, the eighth seed, downed 17-year-old Kournikova 6-3, 6-1 in their first-round contest and was joined in the second round by sixth-seeded South African Amanda Coetzer, who beat Natasha Zvereva of Belarus 7-5, 6-4.

Patty Schnyder delighted the Swiss fans with a 6-2, 6-3 triumph over Italy's Silvia Farina but French player Sandrine Testud was quickly brought back down to earth after winning last week's tournament in Filderstadt, Germany.

American Corina Morariu, a qualifier, beat Testud 6-3, 2-6, 6-4 and now faces second-seeded American Venus Williams.

Top-seeded duo Lindsay Davenport and Williams both received first-round byes.

Germany needs new government to back 2006 World Cup bid

COLOGNE (AFP) — Germany's football authorities are eager for the Social Democrats of chancellor-elect Gerhard Schroeder to conclude their coalition talks with the Green Party so that the German Football Federation (DFB) has a government to consult about its bid to stage the 2006 World Cup.

"We must have state guarantees, which no football association can manage on its own, by the end of the year," DFB spokesman Wolfgang Niersbach said.

"FIFA wants to know how we, as a federation and a state, plan to manage the World Cup," he added.

The outgoing government of Helmut Kohl has always given the German bid its full support, along with seven large companies who are covering the 15 to 20 million marks campaign costs.

Schroeder indicated he would back the bid during talks with DFB President Egidius Braun back in April but now more concrete assistance is required on stadia, security, budgeting, and tax relief to fulfil FIFA guidelines.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANNIAH HUSCH
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WHICH FINESSE?

Both vulnerable. South deals.

<p>NORTH</p> <p>♠ 10 6 4 2</p> <p>♥ 7 4 3 2</p> <p>♦ A Q 3</p> <p>♣ 4 3 2</p>	<p>EAST</p> <p>♠ Void</p> <p>♥ 9 8 7 5 3</p> <p>♦ J 10 9 8 4</p> <p>♣ J 10 5</p>
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SOUTH

♠ A J 9 8 7 5 3

♥ A Q

♦ 3

♣ A Q

The bidding:

<p>SOUTH</p> <p>1♠</p> <p>2♥</p> <p>3NT</p>	<p>WEST</p> <p>Pass</p> <p>Pass</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>NORTH</p> <p>5♠</p> <p>Pass</p> <p>Pass</p>	<p>EAST</p> <p>Pass</p> <p>Pass</p> <p>Pass</p>
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Opening lead: Jack of ♠

When faced with a choice of finesses, there are two ways to proceed. One is to hope that the fates will be kind and bless whichever finesse you plan to take. The other is to try to find a line that avoids a guess.

The South hand is a whistler's short of a demand bid although many players would select that initial action. South chose the conservative one-spade opening, but came

alive once North raised. Asking for kings was naive at best. Had partner shown a king, was South going to gamble a grand slam? And North could not possibly have an ace and two kings for a single raise.

West led a heart, taken in hand. Declarer cashed the ace of spades to discover there was a trump loser when East discarded a heart. The slam now seemed to depend on which minor-suit finesse would succeed.

Cashing the remaining hearts, then throwing West on lead with the master trump won't help one iota. The problem is that West can exit with a diamond, leaving South in the same predicament of which finesse to take.

There is, however, one approach which enables declarer in effect to try both finesses! After discovering there is a trump loser, declarer should cash the ace of diamonds, clear the high hearts and then throw West in with the king of spades.

Since a club shift would be into declarer's major tenace, West must return a low diamond. The queen is played from dummy. If it wins, all is well and the queen of clubs is discarded from hand. If the lady is covered by the king, declarer ruffs, crosses to the table with a trump and tries the club finesse. Isn't that twice as good as having to guess?

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Heaven's Theatre
	TEL: 434144	TEL: 434144	TEL: 5699238	TEL: 5677420	TEL: 5924793	TEL: 5934793	TEL: 4615155
	Kevin Sorbo .. in KULL THE CONQUEROR Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Bruce Willis .. in LAST MAN STANDING Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 Adel Imam .. in AL ZATEEM Show: 10:30	CONCORD "1" NASSER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" UP CLOSE & PERSONAL Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Harrison Ford ... in SIX DAYS SEVEN NIGHTS Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Watch out for the new play.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Stefanki to coach Bjorkman

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman has taken on American coach Larry Stefanki, former trainer of Marcelo Rios, the Svenska Dagbladet daily said on Wednesday. Bjorkman, 26, and Stefanki have signed an initial four-week contract starting on Monday. If things work out well they will sign a one-year contract, the paper said. The Swede has been without a trainer since he parted company with Swedish trainer Fredrik Rosengren earlier this season. After a sensational 1997, Bjorkman has had a moderate season in 1998 and has slipped to 12 in the rankings from four at end-1997. Rios fired Stefanki, the man behind his rise to number one, about six weeks before the U.S. Open in September.

Dahlin set for Hamburg move

HAMBURG (AFP) — Swedish international striker Martin Dahlin looks set to end his miserable spell at English Premiership side Blackburn Rovers by joining Bundesliga outfit Hamburg it was revealed on Wednesday. The 30-year-old, who started for Sweden in the 1994 World Cup finals where he scored four goals, has been at Blackburn since the 1997-98 season but a mixture of injuries and poor form has limited him to fleeting appearances. "We hope to reach an agreement soon," Hamburg president Werner Hackmann said. Hamburg, who currently lie fifth in the table seven points off leaders Bayern Munich, want to take the striker on loan for the rest of the season with a view to making it a permanent move. Dahlin, who played for Borussia Monchengladbach scoring 60 goals in 125 matches between 1991-96, would cost 400,000 marks (\$243,000) on loan and 2 million deutsche marks if the 1983 European Cup winners bought him outright. "Dahlin really wants to play for us because he feels it would increase his chances of getting back into the national side," Hamburg coach Frank Pagelsdorf said.

Butt to miss second Euro clash

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Manchester United midfielder Nicky Butt will miss next week's Champions' League clash with Danish outfit Brondby after he was hit by a two-match ban by UEFA. Butt missed United's last match against Bayern Munich following his red card for handball against Barcelona last month and now UEFA has ruled that he is suspended for another game. A UEFA spokesman said: "When a player is sent off they automatically miss the following game. It is then up to the UEFA disciplinary committee to decide on the length of the ban, whether it will be one match in total or two or three. United are already without David Beckham, who is also banned after picking up his second yellow card, for the Brondby game, while Danish goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel is struggling to recover from a stomach muscle injury.

Ferguson escapes UEFA rap

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Manchester United Manager Alex Ferguson has escaped punishment over his outburst against referee Stefano Braschi following last month's Champions' League draw against Barcelona. The Manchester United manager could have been fined or hit with a touchline ban after his verbal attack on the Italian official who awarded Barcelona two penalties and sent off midfielder Nicky Butt in the 3-3 draw at Old Trafford. A UEFA spokeswoman said Wednesday: "The committee has ruled that no sanctions will be taken against him."

UEFA fine FA after fan trouble

NYON (AFP) — The England Football Association have been fined £27,000 by UEFA for alleged racist chanting by England fans at a black Swedish player during the recent Euro 2000 qualifier as well as damage caused to the stadium after the game. UEFA acted after a complaint by the referee that racist chants had been directed at Celtic striker Henrik Larsson during the game. But the majority of the fine was for damage wreaked by hooligans on the Rasunda Stadium in the aftermath of England's 2-1 defeat.

Frenchman to swim for Vietnam

HANOI (AFP) — A French swimmer with a Vietnamese father is bidding for dual nationality so he can represent Vietnam in the Sydney Olympics in 2000. Eric Huynh, a 30-year-old 50-metre freestyle specialist says he is not good enough for the French team but Vietnam was interested. Huynh said he had received positive overtures from the Committee for Overseas Vietnamese and the Vietnamese Olympic Committee. The civil servant said it was his dream to compete at the Sydney Olympics "before hanging up his goggles." But while France recognises dual nationality, candidates for Vietnamese nationality must renounce their previous citizenship. Vietnam, which is attempting to appear more welcoming to the more than three million overseas Vietnamese recently passed a nationality law leaving the door open for exceptions. "If I succeed, it will open a gap," explained the swimmer who hopes to maintain his French nationality but has spent more than two years pursuing his quest. On Saturday he will participate in a national swim meet against top Vietnamese swimmers. His best time for 50m is 25.86sec, just one hundredth of a second off the Vietnamese record.

NFL Chargers fire Gilbride

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — Kevin Gilbride was fired as coach of the National Football League's San Diego Chargers here on Tuesday, two days after the club fell to 2-4 on the season. The Chargers, 7-6 losers to Oakland on Sunday, have lost four games in a row. June Jones, the team's quarterback coach, will take over Gilbride's duties. He has been crucial in the development of rookie passer Ryan Leaf, who has struggled in his early NFL showings. Leaf, who has struggled in his early NFL draft, struggles the second overall pick in the 1998 draft, struggles Sunday, completing only 7 of 18 passes for 78 yards while being sacked three times and intercepted three times.

Premier League

Faisali meet Hussein Friday

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Most teams will be aiming for outright wins knowing that results in upcoming matches will affect their final overall standings as they start the second week of the final round of the Premier League Championship.

Al Faisali still lead the standings after an important 3-0 win over northern rivals Al Ramtha who dropped down to fourth.

Al Faisali next host the other main rival team, Al Hussein Friday.

The latter scored a 3-0 win of their own over Al Jazireh who have only scored two victories this season.

Al Jazireh next play Al Ahli whose fans are cheer-

ing after their first victory of the season, 3-2 over Shield champs Kufroum.

The win enabled Al Ahli to move from bottom-place to 9th.

Al Wihdat remained second after a 2-1 win over now last placed Al Arabi who have allowed 24 goals in.

The titleholders will next play 5th placed Shabab Al Hussein Thursday aiming for a win while hoping that the leaders draw or lose to regain the lead.

Shabab Al Hussein, formerly a first division team, are halfway through the ten-team standings after a 3-0 win over Al Qadisiyah who have won two matches so far.

The top ten teams are playing two matches a week to end the fourth and last of

the season's soccer competitions on Nov. 20.

Al Wihdat are looking for their 5th consecutive Premier League title after winning the season-opening fourth Cup Winners' Cup.

Al Faisali took the second of the season's four soccer championships when they won their record 10th Jordan Cup.

Kufroum, playing in the prestigious league for the third year running, made history when they clinched their first ever major title by beating Al Hussein to win the country's third title — the Jordan Football Association (JFA) Shield.

Al Wihdat, who have won the Cup and Cup Winners' Cup in the last two years and the Premier League in the last four.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Faisali	10	9	1	1	29	5	27
Wihdat	10	8	1	1	24	10	25
Hussein	10	5	1	4	10	7	16
Ramtha	10	4	3	3	13	14	15
S. Al Hussein	10	3	5	2	12	12	14
Qadisiyah	10	2	4	4	14	18	10
Jazireh	10	2	3	5	7	14	9
Kufroum	10	1	5	4	8	19	8
Ahli	10	1	3	6	7	13	6
Arabi	10	1	3	6	12	24	6



Michael Chang

Chang hit by Singapore jinx

SINGAPORE (R) — Michael Chang's Singapore Open jinx struck again as he went out in the first round for the second year running at the \$700,000 ATP Tour tournament on Wednesday.

German qualifier Michael Kohlmann ousted crowd favourite and American third seed Chang 3-6 6-3 6-4.

Chang, who fell to compatriot Jonathan Stark in the first round here last year, cruised through the first set but a break in the seventh game of the second was enough for Kohlmann to level the match at a set

apiece.

In the third set it looked as if the German suddenly had all the answers to Chang's strokeplay. Two breaks of serve and Kohlmann was serving for the match at 5-1.

But Chang, fresh from his triumph in the Shanghai Open last week, hung on. He broke the German and then held serve himself to narrow the gap to 5-4. But when the German served for the match a second time, he made no mistake.

Starting with an ace, he volleyed the next two points with great authority to set up

three match points. The first was saved by Chang with one of his vintage returns, but on the next he failed to keep his return in.

Number two seed Goran Ivanisevic, beaten in the Shanghai Open final by Chang, faced little challenge from American Steve Campbell.

Ivanisevic sped to a 6-2 6-1 victory to set up a second round clash with Australian Mark Woodford, who ousted South Africa's Marcus Ondruska 7-6 6-2.

Advocaat interested in Guivarc'h

GLASGOW (AFP) — Glasgow Rangers manager Dick Advocaat admitted on Wednesday that he is interested in signing French World Cup winner Stephane Guivarc'h.

The unsettled Newcastle striker, who failed to shine during the World Cup after finishing leading scorer in the French championship in two successive seasons, was bought in the summer by former Magpies boss Kenny Dalglish.

However, the 28-year-old former Auxerre striker is now set to leave as new manager Ruud Gullit attempts to finance his re-building of the side.

"We have been looking for a proven striker for a long time now," Advocaat said. "And maybe Guivarc'h could come to the club."

Guivarc'h has had an unhappy time at the English Premiership giants since his transfer with injury hampering his first-team progress and

United will be looking to recoup the £3.5 million (\$5.5 million) they paid.

The Scottish giants, whose attempt to win a record 10th title in a row was halted by arch-rivals Celtic last season, are also said to be interested in Paris Saint Germain's unsettled Italian striker Marco Simone.

The Scottish side are prepared to renege their offer and pay the 29-year-old former international a monthly wage of £120,000 (\$180,000).



Former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson is sworn in at a hearing before the Nevada Athletic Commission to determine whether he will regain his boxing licence, at Cushman Field in Las Vegas, in this Sept. 19, 1998 photo. Tyson's lawyer John Branca is at left. A report by a team of psychiatrists who examined the former heavyweight champion portrays him as lacking in self-esteem and depressed to the point that he has been taking anti-depressant drugs in the months following the Holyfield fight. However, the report says the former heavyweight champion is 'fit to box again.' (AP Photo)

Tyson deemed 'fit' to fight again

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Mike Tyson was extremely depressed at the time he bit Evander Holyfield's ears and is unlikely to commit such an act again, a medical panel says in a report that finds he is "fit" to return to the ring.

Tyson said he was feeling betrayed by "people" who would have died for "leading up to the June 1997 fight against Holyfield, according to the psychiatric report released today by the state attorney general's office.

The report, by a team of doctors who examined the former heavyweight champion last month, portrays him as lacking in self-esteem and depressed to the point that he took anti-depressant drugs in the months following the Holyfield fight.

The report was ordered by the Nevada Athletic Commission as a requirement for Tyson in his attempt to regain his licence, which he lost for biting Holyfield. The commission meets Monday to consider the request.

The report says Tyson has a "constellation of neurobehavioural deficits" that include problems with attention span, memory, reading, spelling and impulse control.

One doctor speculated that Tyson, who said he never lost consciousness in the ring but did several times after beatings as a child, may have residual attention-deficit disorder. Tyson told the doctors he has had feelings of sadness, hopelessness and helplessness "all my life."

He was alternately engaging and hostile during the five days of exams. Two of the doctors treating him said he snapped in anger at them in separate instances, expressing a "wish" to harm one of them at one point.

"It was this evaluator's clinical impression that this incident did not reflect Mr. Tyson's intent to intimidate but rather that it was an expression of a fantasy in reaction to the frustration of this evaluation," Dr. Jeremy D.

Schmahmann wrote.

The report did not say whom Tyson was angry at before the Holyfield fight, but he later had a bitter split with promoter Don King and his managers, John Horne and Rory Holloway, claiming they stole millions of dollars from him.

The team of six doctors, which examined Tyson at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, found that he was fit to fight again and not likely to bite another opponent.

The report says Tyson felt "embarrassed and humiliated by having to undergo five days of testing and was concerned that people would think he was 'psycho'."

"I have no self-esteem, but the biggest ego in the world," Tyson said.

The report recommends that Tyson undergo psychotherapy and that his problems with depression and self-esteem can be treated without any further medication. The report said he had been taking the antidepressants after the Holyfield fight and for the last month, but stopped because it made him lose his urge to fight.

It concludes by saying there is no way to predict future behaviour, but the doctors believe Tyson is fit to box again.

"It is the opinion of the evaluation team that Mr. Tyson is mentally fit to return to boxing, to comply with the rules and regulations, and to do so without repetition of June 28, 1997," the report said.

"While we take note of the impulsivity, emotional problems and cognitive problems outlined above, it is our opinion that none of these, alone or in combination, render Mr. Tyson mentally unfit in this regard."

The doctors included a neuropsychologist, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, two neurologists and a doctor-lawyer.

The commission will

meet Monday to determine whether to relicence Tyson. If Tyson is denied a licence, he will have to wait another year to be able to return to the ring.

Tyson and his wife, Monica, had fought to keep the report private, arguing that only members of the commission needed to know the state of the inner workings of the former champion's mind.

But after a state Supreme Court ruling Monday that favoured the release of the reports, he signed a waiver agreeing to make them public.

The report offers some tidbits about Tyson's life, including the fact that he told doctors he drank alcohol four days before the tests. Tyson had problems with drinking in his younger days, but converted to Islam in prison and had said he did not drink any longer.

At issue at Monday's hearing will not only be Tyson's psychological records, but questions about a fight after a fender-bender he was involved in on Aug. 31.

"It will be a very interesting hearing," predicted Marc Ratner, the commission's executive director.

The major question asked by the commission was whether the doctors believe Tyson is mentally fit to compete without having another episode like the one in which he bit Holyfield's ears.

Tyson and his advisers want the hearing as soon as possible because they want Tyson to fight on Dec. 5 if he gets his licence back.

Tyson faces trial in Montgomery County, Maryland, the same day the commission meets on assault charges filed by two men stemming from the traffic accident outside Washington.

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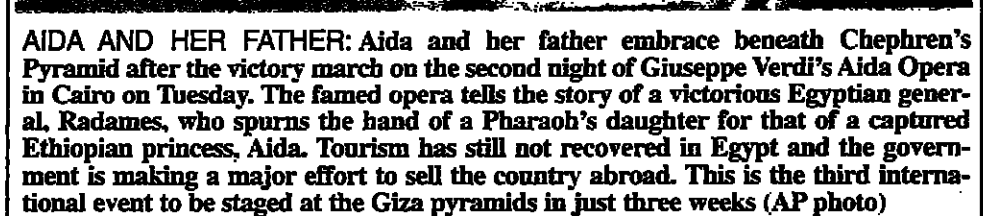
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40,000 personnel in four days if required. "The U.S. is capable of military action. However, we are hopeful that there will not be any need for that," he said on the Bahrain leg of his

Cohen also used his tour to urge Gulf states to help set up an anti-missile defence system.

"There is a danger that terrorists are turning to civilian targets... as a way of advancing their cause," a U.S. military source said, adding that "there is a need to coordinate our efforts."



AIDA AND HER FATHER: Aida and her father embrace beneath Chephren's Pyramid after the victory march on the second night of Giuseppe Verdi's Aida Opera in Cairo on Tuesday. The famed opera tells the story of a victorious Egyptian general, Radames, who spurns the hand of a Pharaoh's daughter for that of a captured Ethiopian princess, Aida. Tourism has still not recovered in Egypt and the government is making a major effort to sell the country abroad. This is the third international event to be staged at the Giza pyramids in just three weeks (AP photo)

MESSINA (R) — A Sicilian bridegroom took public revenge on his cheating bride at their wedding ceremony by answering "I don't" when asked if he would take her to be his lawful wedded wife. The man had returned from a stag party the night before his nuptials to discover, unbeknownst to them, his fiancée in the arms of the would-be witness to the marriage. "It's not me you should be marrying, it's your lover, sitting in the front row, who's meant to be my witness," *Il Giornale* newspaper quoted the groom as saying in the church in Messina, Northwest Sicily.

KAMPALA (R) — Thousands of Ugandan students are unsure whether they have won university places after rats chewed through computer cables at the National Examination Board causing the system to crash, a newspaper reported. The New Vision daily said senior board officials were very concerned that rodents were able to infiltrate areas holding such vital information. The hitch has affected students who were to be placed in teacher training colleges, polytechnics and medical institutions. It is not the first time that rats have eaten away at important installations in Uganda.

KINGSTON (R) — More than 50 Jamaican prisoners were temporarily freed over the weekend to attend a dance, a decision a prison guards spokesman said was crazy. He said the prisoners' spouses were at the dance, and that it was a thinly-veiled excuse to circumvent a ban on conjugal visits for prisoners. The prisoners at the South Camp Road Rehabilitation Centre were accompanied by warders to the Saturday night dance at a military recreation centre. There were no escapes.

LONDON (AP)—Sacré bleu! A wine buff says he has proof that it was the British—not the French—who invented champagne. Author Tom Stevenson has spent the last 12 years trying to persuade the wine world that there is a hiccup in the accepted history of the wine-making method that produces champagne. In his latest book, "A World Encyclopedia of Champagne and Sparkling Wine," Stevenson publishes a document he says proves the British were the first to deliberately produce a sparkling wine.

BEIJING (R) — China's growing army of beer drinkers faces a more serious hazard than bulging bellies or morning hangovers — exploding beer bottles which injured 470 people this summer. The beer bottle explosions caused when shoddy glass bottles burst in the summer heat maimed 27 of the wounded, many with eye injuries, the China Economic Times said on Wednesday. Explosions during the July-September peak beer drinking season were up 130 per cent over 1997 and accounted for 79 per cent of consumer product safety accidents nationwide, it said. The problem stems from a bottle shortage which causes some brewers to repeatedly reuse containers long past their shelf life. Beer, at about 3.0-5.0 yuan (30.36-0.60) per bottle, is too pricey for China's hundreds of millions of farmers, who prefer the far cheaper buzz of sorghum spirits.

But the director of the Jordanian holding company Century

Wireless plc, which are of particular interest to Salah.

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sive years in Casablanca, Amman, Cairo and Doha were the result of the Middle East peace process

getting an agreement for Israel to withdraw from a further 13 per cent of the West Bank.

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